


A NEW HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE



MODERN GREECE  
A History since 1821

JOHN S. KOLIOPOULOS AND THANOS M. VEREMIS

 WILEY-BLACKWELL

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*To the memory of Ergenia Hatzidaki  
as a token of gratitude by the two authors*





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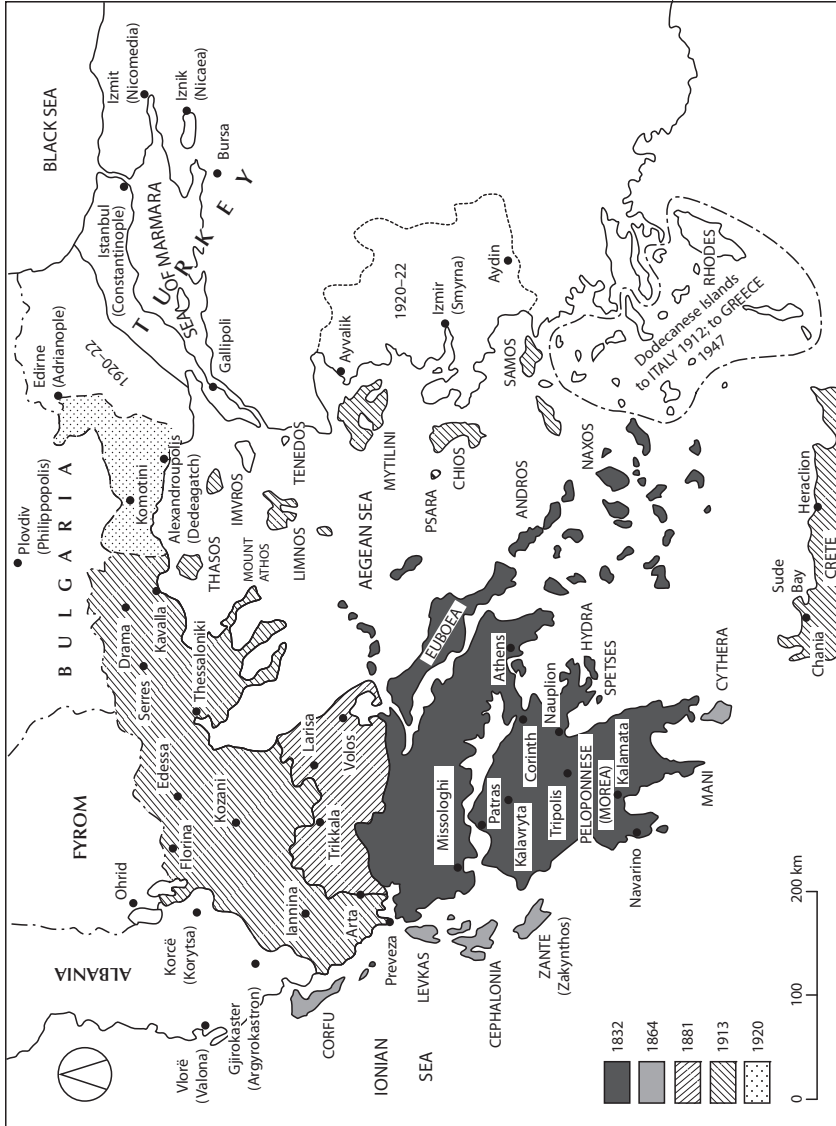
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“We moored on shores ... Justice,” from *George Seferis. Collected Poems*, translated and edited by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955, p. 7.

“Praised be the light ... Poseidon,” from *Odysseus Elytis. The Axion Esti*, translated by Edmund Keeley and George Savidis. London: Anvil Press, 1980, p. 77.



**Map 1** This map demarks the consecutive territorial enlargements of Greece, including the Greek mandate in Izmir (1919–22)



# INTRODUCTION

Nation-states are still considered the primary actors of international politics. Their origins vary widely. Some were born out of revolutions, others out of major wars and the collapse of empires, the more fortunate being the products of colonial fatigue. What do we know of the heritage, the birth pangs, and the social history of most nation-states?

Nation-states can be divided into those with fairly recent cultural idiosyncrasies and those that look for their origins in the distant past. Some are homogeneous in cultural terms, as are Greece and Portugal, others are multiethnic entities such as the USA or the former USSR. Even the latter however share a common political credo, be it Lockean Liberalism or Marxism-Leninism. Some were blessed with a peaceful social history, others suffered violent divisions, especially in the twentieth century.

Greece's state-building began with a war of independence in 1821 and continued along the lines of its Western prototypes – the twentieth-century French administration, the German legal system, and British parliamentary practices. Greek society suffered two violent divisions during the twentieth century that left deep marks on its cohesion. More importantly the social nexus is permeated by extreme familism that defies the formation of an accomplished civil society.

In writing this work we thought it should contain the perspective we have gained from years of research into Greek sources of political and social history, rather than the views of George Finlay and William Miller, both British scholars who wrote important works on their favorite subject. Their conclusions on modern Greece recur in most of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century histories in English.

There are certain recurring themes in modern Greek history that the reader will find dispersed in our text: state-building, nationalism,



irredentism, diaspora, charismatic leadership, westernization, segmentary society, and civil society. We thought it might be useful in order for the reader to better understand what lies ahead if we accentuated their importance from the outset.

From 1821 (the year of the birth of the Greek state) to the twentieth century, the content of Greek nationalism underwent significant change. The Western principles of government and administration that inspired Greek statecraft were ushered in by an enlightened diaspora; the new nation-state, however, secured widespread loyalty only after it became the champion of its unredeemed brethren. The Greek language constituted an adhesive element of the Greek “imagined community”<sup>1</sup> and was transmitted by the Orthodox Church as the par excellence medium of higher learning. The same language that made salvation accessible to the Christians who read the New Testament in Greek became the key to a new reading of antiquity under the guidance of enlightenment apostles such as Adamantios Korais (1784–1833). Historian Constantinos Paparrigopoulos (1815–91) added the missing link of Byzantium and its imperial claims to Greek nationalism.

The new state adopted Western principles of governance that antagonized domestic political practices. The traditional segmentary society resisted the unifying impetus of the modern unitary state. Drawing authority from its control of 70 percent of all cultivable land, the state succeeded not only in eradicating traditional centers of local power, but also in producing an official creed, which ultimately mustered the loyalty of its subjects and became a cohesive bond between them.

The most influential historian of the nineteenth century was certainly the nationalist exponent of Greek irredentism, Constantine Paparrigopoulos. He spent a lifetime writing his multi-volume *History of the Hellenic Nation*, mainly to counter the views of the Austro-Bavarian professor Jacob Philip Fallmerayer who, in line with theories of race then prevalent in Europe, postulated in 1835 that modern Greeks were really Albanianized Slavs. “So what,” replied Paparrigopoulos pointing out that neither the Greeks or any other European nation, had ever been ethnically pure in history. It took Paparrigopoulos thousands of pages to refute Fallmerayer’s theory by asserting the cultural, rather than racial, continuity of the Greeks.

During the centuries of Ottoman rule the Orthodox Church represented a captive flock as well as performed its spiritual functions. Its political role vis-à-vis the Muslim authorities made it liable for

any unrest against the serenity of the Sultan's state. Although the Ecumenical Patriarchate condemned the Greek War of Independence and preached forbearance, the Sublime Porte subjected Orthodox prelates to a bloodbath that drove survivors to join the revolution.

The Greek state inherited an educational system which was entirely church based. Since the language of the holy scriptures was Greek the merging of religious and secular education was accomplished with little effort. Orthodoxy, with its Ecumenical appeal, and the Greek language as a vehicle of universal values became the initial building blocks of Greek nationalism. Several decades after the foundation of the state, European romanticism and Balkan parochialism introduced the exclusive and hostile version of nationalism. In 1833, the Church of Greece was declared independent from the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch, it was brought firmly under state control, and eventually became a mouthpiece of the nation-state. Instead of adopting Koraes' skepticism of the clergy, the state incorporated the church and its martyrs into the pantheon of the heroes of the nation. Thus the church became an accomplice of the state in its mission to spread the cohesive nationalist creed.

But how did a people with no prior experience of state identity define themselves? In the first revolutionary constitution Orthodox Christianity was a principal qualification of the Greek identity, the other being residence in the free realm.<sup>2</sup> The Greek language was mentioned a year later in the second revolutionary constitution. The multilingual people who resided in the realm wrenched by the revolutionaries from the Ottomans became the recipients of a linguistic education that ultimately homogenized them.

The *heteroglossoi* or *heterophonoi* (heterolinguals) of the initial Greek national state, principally Albanians and Vlachs, caused no embarrassment to Greek nation-state builders. At the time, no other Balkan nationalists claimed either of the two as their brethren. Besides, after many centuries of cohabitation, both the Albanians and the Vlachs of southern and central Greece had been comfortably Hellenized in most respects and, in some cases, in speech as well. Moreover, both had generously contributed in the making of the Greek nation-state in the southern Greek peninsula, the Vlachs in the Greek Enlightenment and the Albanians in helping win the war against the Turks; and both identified with Greek national aims and future irredentist objectives. Both Albanians and Vlachs were numerous enough not to be frowned upon, let alone discriminated against. Other heterolinguals, the descendants

of the Slavs of Macedonia, a fair number of whom fought in southern Greece with distinction after the collapse of the uprisings in southern Macedonia in 1821 and 1822, and who were given land to settle in the independent Greek nation-state, were again not differentiated from the rest of the Greeks. They were referred to as “Bulgarians” or “Thracian-Macedonians,” and were thought to be Bulgarian-speaking brethren. They, too, identified with the Greek nation-state no less than the Greek-speaking Greeks of the time. In any case, most heterolinguals of Greece of the time, and later times, spoke and, in many cases wrote, enough Greek not to feel excluded from the rest of the Greeks. The Greek-dominated Orthodox hierarchy and the dominant position of Greek education and language in commerce in the Ottoman Empire were respectable and unassailable endowments for the nation-state to draw upon for many decades to come. The role of the language as a major instrument of acculturation into Greek citizenship cannot be exaggerated, although its beneficiaries have often taken this for granted.

The role of the modern state with its uniform educational system has been paramount in shaping national identity and national consciousness. The relationship between the nation and the state (the people and the institution) varied over time: from total identification, to brief estrangement after Greek irredentism foundered on the weakness of an ineffectual state in 1897. By 1922 the Greek nation and the Hellenic state converged to a final symbiosis through the unification of Greek-inhabited territories with the mother state and the incorporation of ethnic refugees seeking sanctuary in the national center.

The political ideals of the merchant class which imported Western ideas in the Balkans were at the center of Western enlightenment and revolution. The paradigm of the unitary state, evolving out of French absolutism, became the prime example of all emerging nation-states of the European nineteenth century. No doubt the landless peasants, the warlords, and the seafaring islanders who waged the Greek War of Independence against the Ottomans had a far less clear view of their ideal polity. The dedication of these strata to the Enlightenment was questionable, but even the most backward of warlords realized that the success of the revolution depended on the legitimacy it would secure from the great powers. Modernization of the backward Ottoman province became a *sine qua non* in all-revolutionary blueprints. Harbingers of the uprising, such as Rhigas Velestinlis (1757–98), Koraes, and the anonymous author of the *Greek Nomarchy*, provided the

model for future state-builders that could transform peasant subjects into full-fledged citizens of a unitary constitutional state.

The influence of those born outside the realm of the 1830 Greek State (the heterochthonous Greeks) continued throughout the formative years of modern Greece. Such heterochthons, as Capodistria, Mavrocordatos, and later Trikoupis (educated in the West), developed a strong commitment among the elite to collective interests and communal solidarity. Their dedication to liberal values often bewildered the locals but Western products were highly regarded in nineteenth-century Greece.

European neoclassicism inspired two antagonistic trends in Greek nationalist thought, one based on the classical example of fifth-century Athens and the other on Alexandria as a cultural capital of the Hellenistic world. Each focused on a different era of a glorious heritage that would set the guidelines for the delimitation of Greece's future boundaries. Each upheld a different definition of the Hellenic identity. The autochthonous (those born within the 1830 boundaries) clung to the fifth century and refused to acknowledge the ideal of a Hellenistic world sharing a common cultural heritage. Whereas the autochthons formed a majority in the realm, the heterochthons constituted its most vital element. Intellectuals from the Aegean, Constantinople, and the Ionian islands, prominent politicians and even warriors of the Revolution, especially refugees who fled the scene of abortive uprisings and flocked into the Greek state, counted among the prominent newcomers. The autochthon subjects fought for their exclusive claim to public offices, but the heterochthons ultimately succeeded in lifting the ban and making government posts accessible to all Greeks. Once the state established its authority, the irredentist creed became an article of faith of all governments and the most potent ingredient of political integration. Although the criteria that allowed membership to the Greek nation had at different times become an object of great debate, most Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians were offered access to an "imagined community" that extended its boundaries beyond those of the state.<sup>3</sup> The state acquired its justification by becoming the sole champion of the nation. Its underdevelopment and poverty did not warrant the confidence of its citizens, but the promise of a bright future did.

The Greek State of 1830 inherited a social structure that can be described along the lines of Ernest Gellner's "segmentary society."<sup>4</sup> The concept is of a pre-modern system intended to protect the extended family and its friends from the transgressions of the authorities. The

war lords, "armatoles" of central Greece, handpicked by the Ottomans among the formidable brigands in order to police the rough terrain of the hinterland, constituted a pure expression of the "segmentary" community. The armatoles operated on a strict hierarchical basis within their own segment that cut society vertically to include various strata within the same clan. Each group would cling to its hard-earned privileges and would consider the members of other competing groups as enemies. Subverting state institutions and penetrating governments has been a constant pursuit of the segmentary community. Clientelism provided the group with its sorely needed connections in a hostile universe.

Nineteenth-century state-building and its modernist institutions aspired to unify a society of citizens under the rule of law. Kapodistrias, Mavrocordatos, Trikoupis, Venizelos, and Karamanlis, all modernizing statesmen, sought to curtail the divisive influence of the segmentary society. They established the rule of law to the best of their abilities and promoted the concept of civil society to offset the pernicious effect of the traditional segmentary community. Splinter groups, clans, and extreme familism were checked by legal constraints and principles of universal application. The solidarity among citizens acted as a counterbalance to the predatory segments of society. The success of promoting civil society in Greece was nevertheless temporary. Principles of modernization always met with silent resistance from the many incarnations of the segmentary society.

Every system produces the heroes it deserves. Such early heroes of the Greek pantheon as Kolokotronis, Karaiskakis, Botsaris and Miaoulis, were selected according to their military contribution to the war for independence. All four, and a host of others, offered invaluable services to the cause of freedom. Latecomers in this company, such as Ioannis Makriyannis, were the choice of twentieth-century intellectuals in search of a popular Greek identity. Makriyannis was a small-time chieftain who left his limited mark during the Revolution. Unlike the hereditary caste of the major armatoles of central Greece, he was a self-made bearer of arms who became visible thanks to his inspired *Memoirs*, published close to a century after the events they describe.<sup>5</sup> Makriyannis was a gifted story-teller and such prominent figures of Greek literature as George Seferis and George Theotokas hailed him in the late nineteenth-thirties as a guiding light of popular wisdom. His work, although it shows a literary flair, is one among several memoirs full of complaints by

war-heroes who felt betrayed by an ungrateful state. Makriyannis won the everlasting sympathy of his compatriots who always tend to identify with the alleged underdog. Others saw his work as an escape from a mundane reality and a flight into a chieftain's indomitable individuality. Some of Makriyannis' more influential contemporary *armatoles* fought under the illusion that the defeat of their Ottoman overlords would signal a transfer of power from the Sublime Porte to the segmented communities of the periphery. The founding fathers of the unitary Greek state, however, dismantled the networks of local notables designated by the Ottomans for the collection of taxes and adopted the French blueprint of centralized administration. When confronted with the successor Greek state that would not tolerate the privileges of peripheral sources of power, chieftains and notables could only register their disappointment with constant complaints or a vain attempt to reverse the westernizing process altogether.<sup>6</sup>

The content of Greek nationalism was further transformed during the interwar period. The Asia Minor debacle of 1922 that put an end to the largest Greek community outside the realm signified the end of Greek irredentism and the beginning of a parochial definition of "Greekness." At the same time the Comintern decided in 1924 that Greek, Bulgarian, and Serbian inhabitants of the geographic region of Macedonia ought to unite into an autonomous whole under Bulgarian tutelage. The decision initially split the Greek Communist Party before it fell in line with the Comintern, but its ultimate compliance made it the target of much abuse by the state. Besides threatening the established social order, the Communists were viewed as conspiring to cede territory from the national body. The "danger from within" was an entirely new threat to a state that had known only external adversaries. The fear of encirclement on both external and internal fronts forged a mentality that looked for overt and covert enemies. Whereas during the years of irredentism state ideology reflected a generosity of spirit toward potential convertees and tolerance for ethnic idiosyncrasies, the interwar state pursued its mission into history. The exclusive relationship with antiquity became one of the two legitimizing elements of ethnicity. The other was ideological purity.

The Greeks of the interwar period were led to believe that all people inhabiting Greece were or ought to have been Greek, not only in sharing the same culture, but also in speech. Greek national ideology was led, under the influence of the threat from Bulgaria and international

communist sedition, into a narrow path which did not allow differences in loyalty to the preponderant culture. The broad and all-embracing approach to national identity of the nineteenth century, which did not distinguish Albanian, Vlach, Slav, or Turkish speakers from the dominant Greek-speaking component of the nation, had given way to a narrow interpretation of Modern Greek identity. Before settling for the more modern approach, which defines the Greek nation as a cultural community embracing all the linguistic groups that the Greeks have incorporated and absorbed in their history, Greek officials would frown upon what had come to be considered dangerous deviations from the Greek model and manifestations that negated the homogeneous nation. The Greek state did not of course invent assimilation, nor did it remain attached to such national visions longer than others in the West, but it was something of a latecomer.

The Metaxas regime of 1936–40 featured some of the trappings of its contemporary dictatorships but failed to secure the enthusiasm of a public that defied regimentation. The fragmentation of Greek society by familial and patronage loyalties precluded the dissemination of “collectivistic nationalisms.”<sup>7</sup> Metaxas’ doctrine was based on the general will and the nation-state as the highest repository of liberty. The regime was defined as the “Third Civilization,” succeeding the Classical and Byzantine traditions and combining elements of both.<sup>8</sup>

Since most ethnic groups in Greece were conservative in their political affiliations and declared their identification with the nation, they did not suffer under the regime. The traditional benign relationship between the major anti-liberal political forces and ethnic groups in Greece was thus carried over to the Metaxas government.<sup>9</sup> The blatant exception to this rule were those Slavonic speakers of northern Greece who had viewed refugees from Asia Minor settled in Greek Macedonia in 1923 as their natural adversaries. Not only were refugees given the coveted property of the exchanged Turks, but the destitute Asia-Minor Greeks enjoyed preferential treatment by the state. For these reasons and because of the highhanded methods of the Metaxas functionaries in the north, who considered the ethnic Slavs politically suspect, the latter were compelled to shift their loyalties to the Communist Party.

During the Second World War Greek Eastern Macedonia and Thrace were annexed by Bulgarian forces in the name of a united Macedonia and Thrace. The western part of Macedonia was occupied by Italian

and German forces which gave the Slavonic-speaking secessionist element a free hand. The about-face of Nazi collaborators after the departure of the Germans brought them once more within the ranks of the Communist guerrillas – Greek and Yugoslav. The civil war of 1944–9 pitted the loyalist Slavonic speakers who fought on the side of the Greek army against the secessionists, who joined the ranks of the Communist-controlled “Democratic Army.” The latter’s defeat signified the exodus from Greece of people who had placed their hopes first on an autonomous Macedonia under Bulgarian tutelage, and subsequently on a Socialist Republic within Tito’s Yugoslavia. Throughout the postwar years the voting patterns in western Macedonia, where most of the present-day Slavonic speakers reside, have favored right-wing parties.

The Greek Civil War polarized society, politics, and ideology. This did not occur under conditions of dictatorial rule in a state which, in spite of various constitutional irregularities and extraordinary measures, continued to observe the essential rules of parliamentary democracy. The Communist Party, which abstained in the 1946 elections and called upon its followers to defy their outcome, was outlawed following the outbreak of hostilities, but all the other parties continued to operate undeterred by the Civil War and the social challenges confronting postwar Europe. Ideological polarization left little margin for middle-class leaders and the intelligentsia to deal with issues other than those of Greece’s national identity and its place in Western Europe.

State ideology (legitimized by the parliamentary system and transmitted through the channels of education and state-controlled radio stations) presented an image of Greece as a besieged nation warding off Communist adversaries and upholding Western values. Yet no principled argument was propagated concerning liberal values and political tolerance. There emerged therefore a form of nationalist fundamentalism, which unlike nineteenth-century irredentism was defensive, exclusive, and parochial. With the state apparatus, a cluster of agencies developed, filled with functionaries (policemen, military personnel, and other guarantors of public order) who enjoyed relative freedom from public scrutiny. Liberal attempts to dislodge these functionaries from power in 1964–5 provoked the wrath of the Crown and encouraged army officers to intervene. The outcome was the 1967–74 military regime.

The functional relationship between Greece and its Western allies was challenged by the advent of the Socialists in power. The



anti-Western undertones in the Panhellenic Socialist Movement's (PASOK) pronouncements, after three decades of almost uninterrupted official loyalty to the US and its European allies, partly reflected the sentiments of those who had been excluded from public life due to their left-wing affiliations. It also reflected widespread disappointment with the West's failure to censure the military junta between 1967 and 1974. Even traditional nationalists opted for PASOK because its criticism of the West stroked the self-esteem of Greeks traumatized by the military dictatorship and the Cyprus disaster that was its natural consequence. Although the movement's leader, Andreas Papandreou's verbal defection from Atlantic solidarity created a negative climate against Greece in Western official quarters, a substantial segment of the Greek public was thrilled by this manifestation of independence vis-à-vis the powerful states of the world.

The collapse of Communism in southeastern Europe generated a widespread revival of nationalism in the region. Memories of the wartime annexation of Greek Macedonia and Thrace by Bulgarian occupation forces were rekindled and all parties (except the KKE) united in opposition to the Macedonian denomination adopted by Greece's newly independent neighbor. Greek foreign policy vis-à-vis the naming of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia became hostage to popular sentiment and international confusion. By the mid-1990s the outburst of defensive nationalism subsided as the perception of the "brotherless" and besieged nation was replaced by a new-found national self-confidence. The consolidation of democracy, improvement of relations with all the Balkan states, and the convergence of Greece with EMU (Economic and Monetary Union) criteria, marginalized the nationalist deputies in Parliament and established a moderate mainstream in politics.

The church, after a century-and-a-half of compliance with state policy, has through its prelates chosen to contest the prerogatives of the Greek government to draft legislation that removes religious affiliations from public identification cards. The paradox lies in the fact that the church, under the late Archbishop of Athens, Christodoulos, was rebelling, not against state supervision, but against the likelihood of a putative separation with the temporal authorities. Having identified with the national ideology, although at the expense of its ecumenical credibility, the church will continue to grasp its affiliation with the state as a life preserver in times of competing material diversions.



**Figure 0.1** Constantine Cavafy's (1863–1933) poetry revives Greek history in his contemporary cosmopolitan setting. The etching is by artist Yannis Kephallinos (1884–1957)

Political and cultural change did not always coincide in time, nor did the various forms of literary and artistic innovation. The Byzantine audiovisual experience although in decline, persisted even after the Enlightenment had made significant inroads in the tracts of philosophers and political thinkers.

The written word has always been the hallmark of modern Greek creativity and a marker of Greek continuity. In the words of Nobel-prize laureate, Odysseas Elytis, “Greek the language they gave me; poor the house on Homer’s shores. My only care my language on Homer’s shores ...” The post-Byzantine mode of painting reached its apex in the sixteenth century and then entered a long period of decline due to the loss of craftsmen. Throughout the Ottoman years two linguistic traditions competed for the hearts and minds of the Greeks: The indomitable folk muse and the music of the spoken language were in tune

with their heartbeat. The works of intellectuals and teachers remained attached to the Alexandrian “koine” and even more archaic forms of expression. It was the Italian literary influence in Crete that caused a new combination of spontaneity with artistic craftsmanship. The milestone of the Cretan theater, *Erotokritos* by Vincencos Kornaros (around 1645), a work of sophisticated creativity, also captured the hearts of the common folks who still sing its verse in Cretan feasts. With the fall of the island to the Ottomans in 1669 the literary charm of the Cretan theater migrated to the seven Ionian islands under Venetian rule. This cultural transfusion constituted the source of all poetic creativity in nineteenth-century Greece.<sup>10</sup>

Contrary to the inspirational gust from Italy, the east was devoid of such influence. The Greek scholars of Constantinople gathered in the neighborhood of Phanar and offered their services to the Sublime Porte. In the Romanian principalities of the Ottoman government the phanariot bureaucrats produced works of intellectual, rather than artistic, merit and preserved the linguistic tradition of antiquity with unflinching zeal.

The most vital ingredient in the cultural brew that became the staple of the Greek nation-state was the linguistic invention of Korais. This leading figure of the Greek enlightenment, who lived in Paris between 1788 and 1833, believed that his compatriots would never attain true freedom from Ottoman backwardness unless they became versed in the scholarly works of their ancient heritage. His purist Greek – “Katharevousa,” based on the biblical Alexandrian “Koine,” obliterated the many dialects of the periphery and established a standard language for the entire realm. Korais’ novelty also contributed to the creation of an identity based on the hope of a Hellenic renaissance. The unification of the state and its geographic fragments was the main priority of the founding state-builders. Such literary visionaries however, as the national poet, Dionysios Solomos (1798–1857) and later, Costis Palamas (1859–1943), trumpeted the cause of spontaneity and creativity over ancestor worship. The long acrimonious conflict between champions of demotic and formal Greek was resolved in 1978 when George Rallis as minister of education adopted spoken Greek as the official language of the state. Yet of all literary achievements of modern Greece the only one that can rival the poetic works of antiquity is that of a diaspora figure whose Greek was hardly the spoken language of his contemporaries of the mainland. Constantine Cavafy was a person of many

incarnations. As Mark Dragoumis put it: “The impression Cavafy gave as a person was not always endearing. A bit of a dandy for whom only the passing moment counted, a gossip, a miser, a self-satisfied aesthete proud to proclaim his decadent sophistication, a man obsessed by his homosexuality ... he made few real friends. Cavafy the poet projects a different image: a quiet skeptic who reduces heroes to size, a recorder of remembered bliss, a coiner of witty epigrams, a master of understatement, a penetrating observer of human nature, he used his poetical means with extraordinary economy.”<sup>11</sup>

In his poetry he rediscovers the forgotten realm of the Hellenistic empire and perhaps suggests to his contemporaries the true nature of the Greek identity.

And out of the wondrous panhellenic expedition  
the victorious the most brilliant,  
the widely renowned, the praised for glory  
as no other has ever been praised, the incomparable:  
we came to be a novel Hellenic world, a great one.  
We: the Alexandrians, the Antiocheans, the Seleucians,  
and the numerous other Hellenes of Egypt and Syria,  
and those in Media and those in Persia, and so many others.  
With their extended dominions,  
and the diverse endeavors towards judicious adaptations.  
And the Greek *Koine* language—  
all the way to inner Bactria we carried it, to the people of India.  
Excerpt from “In the Year 200 BC”<sup>12</sup>

Unlike literature, fine arts and music adopted the ways of the West after the foundation of the state and therefore established a clean break with tradition. Neoclassical Munich, capital of the Bavarians who organized Greek statecraft, became the metropolis of the transition from a post-Byzantine world that was sacred and two-dimensional, into a three-dimensional, secular European modernity.

With Greece’s entry in the European Community in 1981, and in the EMU in 2001, a new period of modernization commenced. Opinion polls have shown the Greeks to be among the most dedicated of EU members to a federated Europe. Some will argue that this is because of the windfalls from the EU, others will point more convincingly to the conflict-ridden twentieth-century history of the Greeks. The influx of close to 1.5 million refugees from Turkey, the enormous casualties of the

Second World War, and especially the Axis occupation (1941–4) and the disastrous Civil War (1946–9), have made the peace dividend of the EU a most desirable state of affairs for Greece.

Almost ten years after the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) was initiated and eight years after Greek membership, it would be safe to conclude that the single currency has reduced asymmetric shocks in the Eurozone. Furthermore, the reduction of exchange-rate volatility and the enhanced integration of the markets promoted Foreign Direct Investment in the European Union.<sup>13</sup>

Greece's EMU membership has proved on the whole beneficial for the economy, but it cannot act as a panacea for all past and present afflictions. The beginning of 2009 finds Greek finances in a precarious condition. The state controls 55% of the economy and it will have to transfer close to 12 billion EURO (10% of GDP) to its creditors in 2009. The cost of the country's public administration amounts to 7% of its GDP. Unfortunately no political party, large or small, has the courage to admit that it is only through curtailing the bloated public sector and its enormous expenditure that Greece may escape its downward slide. A deep-set populism has bedeviled politics since the 1980s and holds court in every sector of society. It will take a reformer of Venizelos' caliber, or the austere influence of the late Karamanlis, to bring the country back on track. The international financial crisis which is now in full swing may ultimately have a sobering effect on the Greeks.

## THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1821–30)

Independence from the Ottoman Turks came for the Greeks after almost a decade of bitter fighting and suffering. When the revolution broke out in Greece in March 1821, the insurgents possessed no agreed plan of military action and lacked an accepted leader. Revolts in the Morea in powerful and rich islands like Hydra and Spetses, as well as in various places in Continental Greece, but not in Constantinople, were the work of agents of a secret revolutionary society, the Society of Friends, whose membership in the previous few years had increased dramatically, so dramatically that there was a danger of its secret mission becoming public.

The revolts followed the apostasy of Ali Pasha of Ioannina in the summer of 1820 and the concentration of Ottoman forces in Epirus to suppress the rebel pasha, which left the Morea virtually free of Ottoman troops and at the same time created a serious vacuum of power in the southern Greek lands of Continental Greece and the Morea. Local militias of Christian Greeks, and Albanians in Continental Greece, Epirus, Thessaly, and southern Macedonia, in the service of the Ottomans till then, found themselves operating free of previous obligations and in situations in which employment favored divided, or even changing, loyalties. These local militias or *armatoles* played a key role both in the outbreak of the revolution and in its outcome. Initially, the only agreed upon aim of the insurgents was imposed by force of circumstances.

Independence from the Ottoman Turks came as a result of both great power intervention to stop the war between Greeks and Turks and the perseverance of the Greek insurgents, who refused to submit to their former masters, even when they suffered great setbacks and saw their families and properties destroyed. Independence came to fewer lands than the ones that had taken up arms against the Ottoman sultan;

indeed, more Greeks were left outside the first Greek nation-state than the three quarters of a million inhabitants of this fledgling state in 1830.

The Greeks had many grievances against their Ottoman masters; or, at least enough grievances, which in the context of the French Revolution's political and ideological legacy, seemed credible, indeed, irrefutable. The tyrannical regime of the Ottoman Sultan of course was no more tyrannical to the Greeks than to the other subject peoples of his anachronistic empire; in many respects the Greeks fared better than less developed Christian subjects of the Sultan, like the Bulgars or the Romanians, over whom Greek prelates or lay leaders exercised considerable authority. The Greek grievances, which however became the underpinnings of the demand for freedom, were formulated by elites already in place and in an atmosphere of rising expectations. The demand for national self-determination rested on a number of arguments which seemed irrefutable: i) The Greeks were a nation distinct and separate from the Turks; ii) The Greeks were subjects of masters who imposed obligations on their subjects but showed no respect for their rights; iii) The Greeks had been subjugated by force and had signed no treaty with their suzerain, who exercised illegitimate authority over them; iv) The Turks were foreign to the lands of Europe they lorded over and should be forced to abandon these European lands; v) The Greeks had the right to rejoin the European family of nations, which owed so much to the Greek classical legacy. The Greek national movement had been growing in the previous three or four decades in Greece proper but particularly in the Greek diaspora in Europe, primarily in such centers as Paris, Pisa, Trieste, Venice, Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest, Jassy, and Odessa, in which a powerful mercantile class lent its support to the growth of a considerable educational and publishing movement. There was a widespread belief among the people involved in this movement, among the Greek Enlightenmenters, that the Greek nation should undergo a thorough regeneration to free it from servile habits grown in the centuries of foreign and tyrannical rule. Education, in addition to preparing them for independent state, for nationhood, was expected to help the Greeks regain their true identity as cultural descendants of the classical Greeks. The Classicist and Romantic movements of the time favored these claims and made them credible and widely accepted.

Education would be a strong wind to the sails of freedom, and freedom would allow the Greeks to further cultivate the identity of their

illustrious ancestors and become again the rightful keepers of their great cultural heritage. Much of course was assumed, but the age favored such assumptions. Who were the Greeks and which were the Greek lands? These and similar questions were seldom asked, and when asked they were left unanswered. The secret revolutionary society, which eventually started the rising, seems to have opted for a more general rising of the Christian peoples of southeastern Europe and the islands of the Archipelago, under Greek leadership of course. Circumstances, however, made the rising an essentially Greek affair.

The times were inauspicious for revolutions like the one the Greeks were preparing. The Europe of the Classicists and the Romantics was also the Europe of Restoration, of triumphant monarchical legitimacy. Revolutionary France was brought to her knees by the united forces of Hapsburg Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain. The dethroned and dispossessed royalty and aristocracy were brought back to power and their privileges were restored – in most places. Count Ioannis Capodistria (1776–1831), the most renowned Greek of the time and best suited to lead the Greeks, advised against a revolution. He had no second thoughts turning down the leadership of the Society of Friends when its leaders offered it to him in 1818. Capodistria, a conservative, was in the service of Tsar Alexander I – he was the emperor's foreign minister – and considered a revolution at the time premature and condemned to failure. So did, in fact, the great Greek man of letters Adamantios Korais, a liberal established in Paris.

The Greek revolution was triggered by impulsive patriots of the Society, first in the Danubian Principalities by Alexander Ypsilantis, its nominal leader, and then in the Morea by some of the most reckless members of the society, such as Papaflesas, a defrocked deacon. Ypsilantis, a Phanariot Prince who held an officer's commission in the Russian army, crossed from Russia into Moldavia on February 24 at the head of a few hundred young Greeks who lived in Russia and proclaimed the Greek Revolution. In Bucharest and Jassy, as well as in other centers of the two autonomous principalities of the Ottoman Empire, there lived many Greeks in the service of the local elite, as well as several hundred Greek students in the famous Academies of Bucharest and Jassy. There were the first recruits of Ypsilantis, but local peasants and their leaders, foremost among them Tudor Vladimirescu, kept their distance from the insurgents, who alone faced the superior forces the Turks sent to suppress the uprising. The revolution which



Ypsilantis sparked in February 1821 was to be a Greek affair which also put an end to Phanariot rule in the two principalities.

The Phanariots were a Greek elite, which had provided rich and powerful members to the service of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and to that of the Ottoman Sultan. Several families competed with each other for the favors of the Ecumenical Patriarch, who was the spiritual leader of all Greek Orthodox Christians, and the Sultan, for high office. Ambassadors of the Porte to European great powers, marine ministers, and prime ministers, but above all ruling princes in Moldavia and Wallachia, the Phanariots constituted an aristocracy of talent, which held and wielded tremendous authority, as long as they kept the favors of their temporal master. Their positions of influence and power in the Ottoman imperial structure were subsequently used to argue that the Greek Revolution interrupted a long process of turning the Ottoman Empire into a joint Graeco-Turkish common *imperium*, which lived only in the minds of some disenchanted Philhellenes, who were disappointed by Greece's Western apprenticeship.

Another "victim" of the Greek Revolution was the imposed cohabitation of Greeks and Albanians. The latter, who for centuries were being Hellenized in the south and Serbianized in the north and were saved as a distinct nation by mass Islamization between the fourteenth and the seventeenth centuries, played for the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans the role the Kurds did in Asia Minor, that of the contracted armed henchmen. In the nineteenth century many Greeks believed that Greek-Albanian competition for military paid service with the Ottoman masters served to sharpen Greek braveness on the hard Albanian wetting stone. In fact, the case of the Greeks who became Ali Pasha's advisers and henchmen ill supports this belief, since the Albanian chieftain's tyrannical rule exercised a pernicious influence on all those Greeks who collaborated with him. Although the Albanians appear to have dragged their feet, when called by the Ottoman Government to shore up more energetically the effort to suppress the Greek insurgents, there is no reason to believe that they did so out of sympathy for the Greeks but in the context of their institutional blackmail of the central government to the benefit of their semi-feudal armed contractual service.

Recruiting an army of contracted armed irregulars required local knowledge and above all resources; keeping such an army in the field required, in addition to knowledge and resources, special skills and a

measure of unquestioned authority. Local knowledge and special skills were in abundance on both sides of the deadly contest, while resources and unquestioned authority were scarce, especially on the Greek insurgent side.

The Ottoman Turks chose to destroy two men who possessed the qualities required to suppress the insurrection, Ali Pasha of Janina and Khurshid Pasha, the initial commander in-chief. Ali Pasha, the Albanian despot of Janina, possessed the necessary resources, local knowledge, special skills and, until he was declared a rebel and an enemy of the Sultan, the authority to command obedience and respect or fear among friend and foe alike. Khurshid Pasha, a former Georgian Slave of the Sultan, who had risen to the top by his ability and character, was able to mobilize both men and resources in the initial and most crucial stage of the war. The Sultan sent Khurshid Pasha to undo the Albanian rebel and, after the latter was executed in January 1822, the former was offered the choice of facing the executioner or taking his own life. The proud Serasker, who had destroyed Ali Pasha and who had in all probability taken possession of Ali's considerable fortune, chose death by poisoning himself just as the Sultan's executioner closed in on Khurshid's headquarters in Larissa in December 1822.

By 1822, the insurgents had been able to face the Sultan's armies, not without some much needed victories in the field, and had seized most of the main centers and citadels in the Morea. The first year of the rising was one of unqualified success for the Greek cause: The insurgents had stood up against their former masters in the field, had dispossessed them of the cities and possessions, had been able amid endless quarrels to convene a constituent national assembly in December 1821 to produce in January of the next year a temporary constitutional charter, and all these without a commonly accepted leader. During the siege of a Moreot castle, a Turk on the defending side asked a Greek on the other side of the separating wall whether they really expected to succeed in the contest, in which they lacked a *Kirally* (lord or monarch); to which the Greek was at a loss for an answer.

Faced with the Greek uprising, the Ottoman Turks chose to construct their own reality, allowing their deep-seated contempt for the Greeks to influence their interpretation of events. From the very beginning they never brought themselves to perceive of the Greek uprising as anything more than a bandit affair. Even to this day Turkish historiography continues to refer to the Greek Revolution as the "Morea revolt." Contempt

and religious bigotry led Sultan Mahmud II to allow the Muslim mob in Constantinople and other centers of the empire with strong Greek presence to murder the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and scores of other ecclesiastical and lay Greek leaders when news of the Greek rising reached the seat of the empire. The Greek insurgents were quick to make capital of the hanging of the Patriarch, both among the Greeks of the empire and in European capitals, most notably in the Russian capital: The Turk was foreign to European civilization and sworn enemy of Christianity; the Greeks would never again trust the Turks nor agree to mediation to submit to Mahmud. If the Turks chose to construct their own reality about the Greek departure from the empire, so did the Greeks about this departure.

Was mediation possible, and who would undertake to play that role? The Ottoman Turks, it seems, expected the Greeks to eventually submit after exhausting themselves, as they had done in the past. In 1770, after a no less organized rising in the Morea and a generous blood-letting by Albanian irregulars, the Greeks had been humbled and driven to submission. Russia, who had pushed the Greeks to revolt to further its own designs in the Near East, was available to mediate. Russia was now unavailable, so were the other great powers of Europe. The Greek affair seemed to be another local disturbance caused by the unavoidable Christian grievances against Ottoman tyrannical administration. The novel feature of this Greek uprising, which seems to have eluded all those who came forward to mediate, was that behind the uprising was a conspiratorial society sworn not to submit once things were brought to a boil. Patriots of all descriptions and objectives rubbed shoulders with adventurers and cut-throats ready to cause a rupture by means designed to force the hand of these who had much to lose and were understandably reluctant to cause a break with the Turks. Higher clergy and lay notables, all of them having kin held at the seat of government in Tripolitsa as hostages in the hands of the authorities, were naturally reluctant to cause a break; moreover, in their capacity as leaders of the folk trusted to their protection, these local leaders were not suitable to act as rebels against the authorities.

Mahmud II and his government ruled out mediated peace and pursued the suppression of the insurrection, but not with the energy required for such an end of the affair. Khurshid Pasha was succeeded as commander-in-chief by Reshid Pasha, but no end of the fighting was in sight. Rumelian Turkish pashas were suspicious of Albanian pashas,

and the latter were openly uncooperative with both Rumelian and Anatolian Turkish commanders of all ranks. Albanian contractual irregulars, who were essentially hired bandits, habitually dragged their feet and prevaricated when it came to hiring their services to the Turks and sometimes did so to the Greek insurgents. Bulgarians, who were conscripted as cavalry auxiliaries, abandoned their Muslim masters for the Greek Christian side. Transportation of Anatolian armies by sea was perilous, in view of the havoc wrought on Ottoman shipping by Greek fireships, while land transportation was costly and forbiddingly long – so long that commanders dreaded the idea of having the responsibility of taking an army across the southern Balkans, via Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Continental Greece, and across the Isthmus to the Morea.

The Greek insurgents, once the insurrection broke out and they succeeded in capturing Moreot citadels, had two main objectives: i) to survive the onslaughts of Ottoman power, and ii) to make the Greek Question a European Question. They realized both objectives, thanks to Mahmud's intransigence and the perseverance of the Greek irregulars against great odds. The longer they returned the heavy blows and refused to lay down their arms, the heavier became the Sultan's blows against the insurgents, and the greater the outcry in European countries against the persecution of a Christian people. The massacre of at least half of the 60,000 population of the prosperous island of Chios, in the summer of 1822, and the dispersion of the rest to various Greek islands and the mainland, harmed the Ottoman sultan's cause in Europe as probably no other violent action against vulnerable people did, throughout the ten-year war of Greek Independence, which was fought on both sides with all the savagery of the age. The liberal romantics of Europe seized upon this and other similar cruelties perpetrated by the Ottoman armies against undefended Greek communities and drummed up so much opposition in Europe that not even the Conservative governments of the time could afford to dismiss the issue.

The massacres of non-combatants suffered by the Greeks in this uneven conflict, projected by Western liberals to a West becoming gradually more and more sympathetic to the Greek cause, further strengthened the existing Philhellenic current in the West and in Russia; so did the feats of the Greek heroes. Theodoros Kolokotronis, Markos Botsaris, Odysseas Androutsos, Kitsos Tzavelas, and other freedom warriors became the heroes of a West lacking at the time similar heroes of its own. The Greeks, descendants and keepers of the great heritage of the

ancient Greek sages and heroes, were fighting for freedom from the Ottoman Empire and for Europe; indeed, they fought Europe's battles against Eastern despotism and barbarism. Forgotten were all the negative stereotypes about the Greeks' past religious quarrels and political antagonisms with the West. Western philanthropy, Classicism, and Romanticism contributed to the growth of the powerful ideological and political movement of Philhellenism, which outlasted the Greek war of independence, but not in the form of a secure endowment for the Greeks to draw upon, as the latter hoped. Was this Philhellenic movement an "extravagance" of Western liberalism, as a Western disenchanted Philhellene thought one century later? Or, was this extravagance a "curse" of the West upon the Greeks, which was responsible for not having gained what was expected of them? An extravagance it was no doubt, but it is more than doubtful that this was responsible for the reputed losses or missed gains of the Greeks following the break away from the Ottoman Sultan's empire.

This view of the West's "curse" on "eastern" Greece, which was put forward after the Greek Revolution and the formation of a Greek nation-state in parts of the historical Greek lands, was shared at the time only by some ultra-conservative ecclesiastical circles for whom the West was an anathema. This view, which was subsequently seized upon by sworn enemies of the liberal nation-state who constructed an Eastern Christian Eden in the Ottoman Empire until the Greek National Revolution, rests on rather weak premises: i) that the Greeks were anchored in the East and were wrenched away from their eastern moorings by Westernized elites bent on destroying "Greek identity," and ii) that national movements like the Greek one and the ones that followed could somehow be kept out of the Sultan's and the Ecumenical Patriarch's lay and ecclesiastical domains respectively, so that this Eastern Eden could be preserved. As developments in the twentieth century have shown, however, the Greek East was not so Eastern, nor was the West so Western, in terms of values and principles developed in the West, at least as far as liberal government of the nation-state is concerned. It seems that – *pace* Arnold Toynbee – the Western Philhellenic "extravagance" of the early nineteenth century was not a "curse" but rather a blessing in many tangible respects.

The Greeks of the time and subsequent decades renovated their nation on the premise that they were, in terms, of language and culture, the descendants of the ancient Greeks and that there has been a

continuity of the Greek language and culture since antiquity in the historical Greek lands; which raised at the time and still raises many eyebrows in the West as well as in the East. Disenchanted Philhellenes like George Finlay in the nineteenth century and Arnold Toynbee in the twentieth, as well as classicists and post-Modernists of all hues, have censured the Greeks for assuming about their identity more than the situation warranted, and have been reluctant to accept that the Greeks have no less a right to choose as their founding national myth a continuous Greek language and culture in what they have defined as historical Greek lands, than the Germans, the French, and the British to their own founding national myths. Indeed, this founding national myth has been successful in convincing the descendants of the non-Greek-speaking groups, no less than Greek-speaking ones of the historical Greek lands, that their claim to cultural descent from the ancient Greeks was not only irrefutable; it has proved a powerful adhesive force, which held the nation together, and has produced substantial cultural achievements in the space of less than two centuries. Constantine Paparrigopoulos, the great national historian of the nineteenth century who worked out the theory of the cultural continuity of the Greek nation since antiquity, provided his compatriots with the material for an identity that has proved lasting and modern; this identity, it should be noted, has been, even when other European identities allowed racism to creep in, ever open and inclusive. It remains to be seen whether this Greek national identity will survive in a multi-cultural Europe, in which even older and no less strong than the Greek identities have been showing signs of waning.

The Greeks of the days of the Revolution of 1821, however, in addition to winning independence and furthering the renovation of Greek identity, have been vindicated in another respect: in securing for Greece a place in the European family of nations. This objective, in fact, was one of the principal aims of the insurgents, for whom Europe was the great legatee of Western Civilization, a land in which the rule of law had secured for men unprecedented freedom, prosperity, and dignity. In the 1820s even to conceive the vision to place Greece safely within the pale of Western Civilization was a wild dream.

Before securing this prize, however, the Greeks did their utmost to win recognition as combatants, so as not to be treated by third parties as pirates. First the British in 1823 agreed to treat with the insurgents to prevent acts of piracy in the Ionian Sea, in which British shipping faced

serious problems. The previous year Lord Castlereagh, a staunch opponent of revolution, died and was succeeded by George Canning, who saw in the revolutions of the 1820s against the aging empires of the Ottomans and the Hapsburgs of Spain in Latin America an opportunity for British commerce. It was an important step in the direction of recognition of the Greeks as a separate nation fighting for their existence and freedom.

The following year, in 1824, the London Greek Committee of distinguished members of British society raised a substantial loan in the name of the revolutionary Greek Government. This loan, in addition to the previous funds made available to the Greeks at a most critical time, further projected the Greek insurgents onto the international scene as a distinct nation fighting for freedom. Philanthropy and the pursuit of commercial interests in a changing world gave the Greek revolution much-needed recognition. The hostilities caused serious problems to sea communications in the Eastern Mediterranean and before long the great powers stepped in with the intention of mediating or intervening in any way to put an end to hostilities which seriously harmed their interests. In 1825 Britain and Russia agreed to offer their services and generally to have their influence felt by the Greeks and the Turks with a view to ending hostilities. The following year France too joined Britain and Russia in the pursuit of its special interests, even as the French were deeply involved in modernizing the army of Mehemet Ali Pasha, Sultan Mahmud's ambitions Vice Regent of Egypt.

The most decisive event of the Greek war of independence was the naval battle between the united fleets of Britain, France, and Russia on the one side and on the other the Turkish–Egyptian fleet, inside Navarino Bay in the entrance to the Gulf of Pylos, on October 20, 1827. That most “untoward” event, according to the British Foreign Secretary, which was caused when the commander of the Turkish–Egyptian fleet refused to heed the order from the three European admirals not to attempt to leave the bay, whose exit was guarded by the European admirals, led to indiscriminate firing. In the ensuing battle, the European admirals obliterated the fleet of their opponents. The famous battle opened the way to Greek independence and at the same time attached Greece to the security system overseen by the great European powers and the three who played a decisive role in this to Greece as its guarantor or protecting powers. The same year, by vote of the insurgent National Assembly, Count Capodistria, one of the architects of Restoration

Europe, was invited to be Greece's first temporary president to prepare the country for the arrival of its first European monarch.

Capodistria, on arriving in insurgent Greece in early 1828, faced a Herculean task without Hercules' superhuman powers. Egyptian troops were still in control of most of the Morea; Albanian bands of irregulars roamed Continental Greece in search of contractual paid service; the revenue system was in the hands of captains who essentially raised revenue from their districts for the upkeep of their own forces; the shipowners of the Island of Hydra, who had suffered forbidding losses in the war, demanded equally forbidding indemnities from the insurgent government; hostilities flared up, not always between the main contestants; the wild district of Mani was outside the reach of the central government and refused to pay taxes or to accept government functionaries; bands of *armatoles* from Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia, in which the revolution was suppressed and in which they could not reclaim contractual armed paid service from the Ottoman authorities, burdened the insurgent government with demands impossible to satisfy.

Moreover, Capodistria had to negotiate Greece's independence and territory with the great European powers and the Porte. Which were the new country's frontiers and on what grounds and criteria? The three protecting powers asked Capodistria no sooner than he set foot on war-torn Greek soil questions which he had to answer convincingly. Capodistria proposed a defensible frontier running along the mountain line separating Thessaly from Macedonia and the greater part of Epirus, but the great powers were not prepared to be so generous to Greece and instead obliged him to accept a line to the south of Thessaly, running from the Gulf of Volos in the east to the Gulf of Arta in the west. The frontier did separate the two nations, in the sense that the Turks who lived before the revolution to the south of the frontier in such cities as Tripolitsa, Patras, Corinth, Athens, and Levia, abandoned the insurgent districts to the custody of European consuls.

The new nation-state on the southeastern fringe of Europe with Capodistria at the helm did not include most of what were known at the time as the "historical Greek lands": Epirus, the Ionian Islands (which belonged to Great Britain), Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace, the Asia Minor west coast, and the adjacent islands, Crete and Cyprus. Perhaps more than two million Greeks lived outside the fledgling Greek nation-state, almost three times more than the three quarters of a



million of the state's estimated population. This nation-state of the Greeks, the first in their history, was destined to be the beacon of light of the New Israel, destined to enlighten the East, and liberate all its people from tyranny. It was not arrogance, but the strong conviction of an intelligentsia steeped in the Western "extravagance" to recreate "Hellas" from the "relics of departed worth." If Byron was convinced that this was not an unlikely task, so were those who were lionized by Byron and the other Romantics of the age as the living remnants of the glory that was once Greece.

Capodistria was no romantic and had no illusions about the extent to which the great powers were prepared to truncate the Ottoman Empire for the benefit of this romantic extravagance. He accepted what the great European powers were prepared to offer in terms of territory for the new state, in the hope that the monarch the protecting powers were to choose for Greece would be in a better position than himself to negotiate with those who looked after the European security system. Besides, territory was not Capodistria's main concern. He faced a devastated country and an economy in ruins. Raising precious revenue became one of his main concerns, as did the formation of regular state services. Both objectives taxed his abilities and energy, because few of those who exercised real authority outside the capital of Nauplion were willing to cooperate. The call for the formation of a regular army was left unheeded by captains and their bands of contracted armed irregulars; they preferred to raise revenue themselves instead of becoming salaried officers of the state. With the assistance, however, of a handful of enlightened and dedicated associates, Capodistria was able to lay the foundations of a modern state based on the states he had come to know in Europe. He was able to suppress piracy and banditry and to establish state primary and secondary education.

However, Capodistria's overriding objective of concentrating authority within the central government foundered on the rocks of strong local interests. Hydriot ship-owners burned the national war fleet in protest at his measures to place the warships under regular naval officers; northern captains and their bands of armed men refused to disarm and demanded salaries in arrears; the Maniot clans were in open rebellion. One of these clans murdered Capodistria on his way to church one Sunday in September 1831.

Capodistria, a man who believed in enlightened government, not necessarily democratic, united against him all the prewar elites, as well

as the Westernized groups of intellectuals, all of whom demanded a constitutional charter, the latter because they believed that a constitution would democratize Greek society and the former in order to regain power, which Capodistria's paternalistic rule had brought to an end in 1828. Capodistria believed that what Greece needed most was honest paternalistic rule, which would, in conjunction with education and the distribution of land to the peasantry, free the people from the influence and control of local tyrannical barons. He feared that the premature introduction of constitutional government would prove an impediment to modernization.

Capodistria's violent end ushered in a new bout of civil strife between different political sects, which fought for positions of influence and power before a monarch from Europe reached war-torn Greece. The Greek Question was finally settled in the summer of 1832, as expected by everyone concerned in the country by the three protecting European powers – Great Britain, France, and Russia – which signed two founding international treaties, one with the Bavarian royal dynasty of the Wittelsbach, which sent one of its princes to Greece as the country's first monarch, King Otto, and the second with the Porte, which recognized the independence and territorial integrity of Greece. By the same treaties, the three great powers assumed the role of the guarantor powers of Greece's independence and regime. For the Greeks of the time, this arrangement was a heaven-sent present and above even their wildest expectations.<sup>1</sup>

## STATECRAFT AND IRREDENTISM (1831–62)

When the news of Prince Otto's (1815–67) selection for Greece by its protecting powers arrived in the civil-war torn country, it caused great jubilation. Otto, the son of the Philhellene King Ludwig of Bavaria, was expected as a delivering Messiah: he was bringing funds, the blessings and support of Europe, the flower of German scholars and administrators, and a German army to help him settle into his new country. His arrival in Nauplion, in January 1833, was greeted with undisguised joy and relief by all Greeks; or so it appeared at the time.

The under-age King Otto ruled by way of a three-man regency until he came of age in 1837. The first years of the new regime were turbulent years, but at the same time a period of statecraft unparalleled in the country's history. A notorious Albanian bandit chief by the name of Zenel Göleka moved undisturbed from Epirus and Thessaly into northern Greece with a horde of several thousand armed men of every possible description and pursuit. This armed host, the flotsam of the ten-year war that had just come to an end and had caused great hardship in the world of contractual armed service, produced some relief in official Greece, as long as it exercised its talents and satisfied its needs on the Turkish side of the frontier, in which it presented its actions as a rebellion against established order. In December 1831, Reshid Pasha, as the Vali of Rumelia, had slaughtered in Monastir, according to local sources, a few hundred Albanian chiefs and their armed guard; all those who had trusted their safety and that of their men to the care of the perfidious pasha from Kioutachia, who had not it seems forgiven the Albanian chiefs for their conduct during the outbreak of the Greek war of liberation.

Göleka's rebellion was part of a general disturbance in central Greece, of armed men, Albanian and Greek alike, who had witnessed the old

order shaken to its foundations and whose services seemed to no longer be needed on either side of the frontier, on the Turkish side because they were no longer trusted and on the Greek side because they were considered unsuitable for the new order in the making; or so it appeared at the time to everyone concerned. An armed band, the remnants of the *armatolic* system of security, moved more or less undisturbed in and out of the Greek frontier districts, unable to settle down in either realm. The central Greek highlands before the 1820s had been the heartland of the *armatolic* system of security and now that region was divided between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek succession state. The frontier became an axis around which armed men revolved and preserved outlawry for nearly 80 years, until the Balkan wars of 1912–13. In 1835–6 disaffected former *armatoles* on the Greek side staged another confrontation with the authorities, this time incited by the Ottomans. Unconnected with this disturbance in central Greece was another armed rebellion in 1834, in Mani in southern Morea, which humbled the German army contingent that was sent to suppress it.

These disturbances were irritating, but not dangerous to the new regime; they were undertaken as muscle-flexing shows of strength to regain lost privileges or to negotiate new ones. Privileged groups of the old order were staging shows of strength to make their presence felt but not to unseat the new regime; they represented some of the most conservative elements of Greek society, and they were divided among themselves. The divisions separating *Moreots* from *Rumeliots* were deeper than those separating them from the new regime. Their calls for a constitution were never more misleading, since a constitution was not in their agenda.

The central Greek chieftains and their armed host refused to enlist in the newly instituted gendarmeries and the regular national army for reasons other than those articulated in their list of grievances. It was not so much the western uniform that ostensibly kept the armed irregulars away from the gendarmerie or the regular army, but the revenue which they raised till then and which they had now to give up and settle instead for a salary. The chiefs of the irregulars were obliged to become salaried officers of the state and move away from their districts, which they considered their secure preserves.

Like Capodistria before them, the Bavarians of King Otto were convinced that what Greece needed was honest regular central government services to concentrate authority and exercise power in the name

of the king, and that the introduction of constitutional government would bring back to power the pre-revolutionary elites, which ruled in the name of the Ottoman Sultan.

These old elites were expected also to bring back the influence of the three "parties," the British, the French, and the Russian, which had appeared during the war and tended to favor the interests of the three respective powers. Without a constitution and a Parliament parties vied with each other for the favors of the king and his government. The Russian party attracted the loyalties of the Greek Orthodox Church and other conservative circles and tended to be the strongest of the three, while the other two, the French and the British, attracted more liberal political elements. Deep social differences divided each "party" more than they divided the three from each other.

In addition to the gendarmerie and the regular national army, the Bavarians proclaimed the independence of the Church of Greece from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which satisfied the liberals but caused the wrath of the conservatives. The Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, which had come into being during the revolutionary war, when metropolitans of the insurgent districts gathered in the seat of the lay revolutionary authorities, did not press the government too hard to revoke the edict which separated the two churches for understandable reasons. The metropolitan of Athens, the Greek capital since 1834, was named Archbishop of Athens and Greece, while the titular head was King Otto, whose Catholicism remained a thorn in the side of his relations with his subjects. A Protestant German princess such as Queen Amalia of Greece did not help matters at all. Conservatives of Greece allied themselves with the Patriarch of Constantinople in condemning the autocephalous Church of Greece, while liberals supported the move as necessary to keep Greek church clerics free from influences of the hostage Church of Constantinople. Lengthy and tortuous negotiations between the Greek government with the Ecumenical Patriarchate eventually led to the compromise of 1850, by which the Church of Greece kept its administrative independence from the "Mother Church" but remained "dogmatically" united. In 1852, the Holy Patriarchal Synod formally recognized the compromise, ending more than 20 years of friction and bitter exchanges.

The country was divided in districts and demes, based on the Napoleonic administrative system, and administrative units were given fitting ancient Greek names, in an effort to purge the country of names

reminiscent of the centuries of foreign rule, especially Turkish rule. Later in the century, when historicism waxed strong and with the assistance of folklore, changes to the country's Turkish, Albanian, and Slavic city and place names became more systematic, with a view to silencing the identification of "new" Greece with a heritage other than an ancient or unedited Greek heritage. If the British had changed Celtic place names into English and the Americans did the same with Dutch place names, so did the Greeks, though in a more thorough manner. It was neither arrogance nor insecurity, but rather a sign of a gigantic and largely successful effort to realize the founding national myth, which turned Greek Orthodox peasants into Greek nationals, very much like the turning of peasants into Frenchmen in France around the same time.

A primary and secondary state-school system to eradicate rampant illiteracy also served the purpose of turning peasants into Greeks. The crowning of the educational system, which was wrenched from the church not without resistance, was the National University of Athens, which was founded in 1837. The national university, perhaps more than any other institution of the new state, became a powerful vehicle of national development in more than one way. The university produced the scholars and the administrators of the new state and at the same time attracted students from the other peoples of the region, until more national universities were founded in southeastern Europe. More significant perhaps for the development of the Greek nation, the University of Athens cultivated and spread throughout the historical Greek lands the national identity of the renovated Greek nation. School teachers with a classical education, lawyers, scholars, and scientists manned the state apparatus, while the Military Academy offered the new state its military officers. A polytechnic on the best European standards produced scores of excellent engineers.

Athens was gradually becoming the fitting capital of the fledgling state. A palace for King Otto, a botanical garden, and a score of fine buildings, the work of excellent engineers invited for the purpose from Germany, adorned the capital and gave it a classical aura. Plans by the young monarch to have his palace built on the Acropolis were dumped by more sombre counselors. Athens was classicized and Europeanized but not to the detriment of its classical antiquities.

The country also seemed to be winning some modest economic progress, at least when compared with the ruined country King Otto

found on landing in Greece. Initial efforts to attract immigrants from outside Greece were met with little or no success at all. Affluent Greeks of the diaspora were very reluctant to abandon the rich life of European centers like Vienna, Trieste, Venice, Paris, and Budapest for life in King Otto's small and still very poor capital. The Philhellenes, who had fought with distinction in the Greek war of independence, had either perished or, with few notable exceptions, had no stomach for the country that emerged from the war, and left disenchanted and critical. George Finlay, although disenchanted, remained behind and became King Otto's and his kingdom's perceptive though uncharitable critic. As a matter of fact, in the initial stages at least, it appears that more people were leaving the country than entering it.

During the disturbances of the mid-1830s authorities became aware of several thousand refugees from Crete, Chios (the Aegean island which had been destroyed by the Turks in 1822), the Asia Minor port of Kydonies (or Aivali, which again had been destroyed by the Turks), and other destroyed Aegean islands, but mostly from the northern historical Greek lands of Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia, in which the revolution was suppressed. These northern Greeks were associated with the system of the *armatoles* and, as defeated insurgents, had been evicted from their territories of influence. These refugees were principally irregulars associated with the contractual system of armed service; they had nowhere else to go and knew no other art than the use of arms. These evicted *armatoles* and their families formed the initial layer of periodic streams of refugees from the irredenta, the streams coinciding with the irredentist uprisings instigated by the Greeks and suppressed by the Turks with the welcome assistance of Muslim Albanian irregulars, who helped themselves to the movable property of the Christians. This refugee element eventually became a powerful political interest, a lobby which made its power felt by all Greek governments. Refugees from irredentist uprisings in the neighboring districts supported future irredentist uprisings in these districts, ostensibly to liberate them from Turkish rule. Such forms of violence in the northern Greek districts created a situation in the region, not unlike both sides of the Austro-Turkish frontier, in which as in all military frontiers (*militär-grenzze*) unlawful acts of all kinds, including brigandage, were permitted, indeed, incited by the authorities of the opposite side.

This legacy of the revolution, of the "First Revolution" as it came to be known, was too popular for King Otto and his government to

disregard; or so it was presented. To solve the problems caused by the destitute refugees from the irredenta, the government had to incorporate them into special formations of irregulars, since they were not fit for service in the regular army. Several hundred irregulars who had ostensibly served in the revolution were incorporated into the gendarmerie, in which however they did not readily give up their past habits and ways of distinguishing right from wrong. A special corps, the frontier guard, proved even more problematic than the gendarmerie; posted on the frontier with Turkey, the new corps proved no lesser evil than the brigands themselves, whom they were expected to suppress. The frontier guard became a hotbed of brigandage, extortion, and protection in the service of local political barons and had strong connections with men of similar pursuits on the Turkish side of the frontier. The state had come to terms with those involved in brigandage and extortion and was obliged to tolerate a measure of both crimes to avoid open disturbances. Short of a strong regular army to suppress this "legitimate" brigandage and extortion, the government, not unlike the Ottoman authorities before the revolution and, on the Turkish side of the frontier, well after the foundation of the Greek state, settled down for circumscribed law and order in the northern districts. The Ottoman approach to brigandage was to come to terms with one set of the criminals and employ them against another set, opting for limited security, because they were convinced that moving armies to suppress the brigands in a region caused more mischief than letting local sets of criminals exercise their talents on the back of the peasantry. In this respect, the Greek government improvised on a deeply embedded tradition in the region, and avoided a clear departure from this tradition.

Eventually, the armed irregulars of every description, brigands and their associates on the right side of the law, were projected as the "army of the nation," in contrast to the regular army of the state. The former were expected to liberate the rest of the nation, since the latter was not allowed by the European security system and principally by the three protecting powers to fulfill this objective. It was a game of self-deception, which became a dominant feature of the new nation-state: the people were allowed to believe that, since the regular army of the state was not permitted to disturb the peace in the region, "the army of the nation" would somehow manage to get away with disturbing the peace and realize the cherished goal. Eventually, everyone concerned – the host of outlaws, the local Greek and Turkish authorities, the great



European powers and the Porte – did not doubt that each new outburst of irredentist action on both sides of the Greco-Turkish frontier was an innocuous game allowing the brigands of the region to exercise their talents, which satisfied their own needs, as well as the need of the authorities to present the affair as strong evidence that the vision of liberating the brethren across the frontier was alive. This game, needless to say, was useful to the authorities on both sides of the border, because the Turks, too, exploited the irredentist escapades to present Greece as a state unfit to be a member of the European security system. Moreover, local Turkish authorities exploited these disturbances, as long as they did not get out of control, to demand more resources from central government to resist foreign aggression.

This game, when all is said, deceived only those Greeks of the capital who read local newspapers, because all other Greeks, especially those for whose benefit the irredentist shows were staged on the occasion of the periodic Eastern crises, knew well that these shows led only to small changes in the ownership of the movable possessions of the local people, especially the ownership of their sheep and goats. In this respect, irredentist forays into the Turkish districts to the north of the frontier essentially amounted to a measure of institutionalized, indeed, contractual brigandage at the expense of the peasants.<sup>1</sup>

Self-deception at a price had a more pernicious influence on the country's political life than the ridicule heaped on Greece on account of the institutionalized brigandage may suggest. Gradually, those who dared to oppose the capitulation of the state to the brigands, liberals like the Phanariot Prince Alexander Mavrocordatos (1791–1865), appealed to a limited number of westernized intellectuals who resented the cheap patriotism, the "pallicarism" of men like John Colettis (1773–1847), the patron of the bandit "pallicars" ("braves") of Continental Greece and first elected prime minister of the country (1844–7).

Politics in Otto's fledgling kingdom was no less deceiving when political parties did not operate, since the king would not grant a constitutional charter. In the first ten years of his reign (1833–44) and until the first Constitution was extracted from him in 1844, King Otto ruled by decree with the assistance of his German and Greek advisers and attended to every conceivable matter of state. Regular relations with other countries were established and, were it not for an outcry in the nationalist press of Athens, official Graeco-Turkish relations would have been established in 1840. All these years, the three political

interests that had come to life in the war of independence, the British, the French, and the Russian, constituted loose collections of politicians serving in some capacity in the central or local government, or were out of service. Both sets, the ins no less than the outs, courted the monarch's favor and at the same time desperately tried to keep a following of political friends mostly through the use of promises, since they had very little else to distribute. Local barons were in an advantageous position in comparison with politicians like Mavrocordatos and others who had come to the kingdom and had no local base of power.

The scramble for office and influence produced disaffection among politicians of all descriptions and pursuits. John Colettis presented himself and his followers, mostly Continental Greek captains and their armed retainers, as the Constitutional Party and conversed with the French minister in Athens. They were as liberal as any party could be liberal in Greece of the time. Constitutionalism was only a front which attracted some liberal intellectuals and a crowd of captains, most of whom considered the constitution synonymous to license for all kinds of unlawful actions, including brigandage and extortion. Conservatives like the hero of the revolution Theodore Kolokotronis, Augustine Capodistria, the murdered president's brother, and the Cephalonian archon Andreas Metaxas led the largest political following, which was backed by the Orthodox hierarchy and Russia. It was by far the most numerous and influential group, having the support of two of the Greek capital's most influential newspapers, *Aeon* and *Soter*. Squeezed between the two, the English party of Alexander Mavrocordatos was the smallest of the three, counting on the support of some Hydriot leaders and learned men, such as the historian of the Greek revolution Spyridon Trikoupis. It was the party which favored liberal reforms, and as such was closer ideologically to the monarchical government.

How then did these followings, which at first sight differed so much from each other, come to agree on demanding the promulgation of a constitution? There were two elements, present in all three parties, which forced the hand of their reluctant leaderships and of the even more reluctant representation of the protecting powers, which were the guarantor powers of the county's regime: i) liberal intellectuals of the French and the English parties principally, but also some Philorthodox circles, opposed to the Catholic monarch from the start and for their own reasons, and ii) Moreot notables, Hydriot archons, and Rumeliot captains, who joined the constitutional cause, and did so not out of conviction but

to force their return to power from the shadows, where they had been kept by the king for a decade. Of the three protecting powers, Britain and France feared that Otto needed to be reined in and kept from disturbing the peace in the region with Russian backing, and did not discourage adequately their ministers in Athens from encouraging conspirators to believe that Britain and France favored their designs. The representatives of the two Western powers feared that Otto was unwilling or unable to rein in irredentist Greek circles in touch with the Russian representatives in the region. The Russian representative, on the other hand, did not discourage the political leaders of the Russian party from joining the conspiracy against the king, if only to be in a position to preclude a solution favoring the interests of Russia's two opponents in Greece.

The conspiracy could have been thwarted by a more resolute monarch, who could muster enough support from political elements loyal to the monarchy, especially the regular military officers. Once the conspirators, however, were able to produce a show of force on the September 3, 1843, it was difficult to put it down, short of bloodshed, for which it seems the king had no stomach. Otto appears to have been surprised by the conspirators; he was so convinced that he offered Greece the best of all worlds that he could not bring himself to believe that the country would ever turn against his rule and himself personally. He caved in to avoid turning Greek against Greek, especially when the representatives of the three protecting powers advised him to do so. The Pronunciamento of September 3, 1843, which was staged by the Athens garrison and the motley crew of conspirators already described, forced the king to promise to convene a National Assembly, which he did without much ado, to everyone's surprise.

The National Assembly, which gave the country its first constitution in 1844 and the first parliamentary government, demonstrated the great difficulty the Greek political forces had in producing a working consensus. The forces of the old order, no less than those of the new order, were so fragmented among themselves that their fragmentation could be matched only by the king's irresoluteness and lack of leadership. Many issues were left undecided, while the compromises reached did not give the political system a clear orientation. Who were the Greeks and who were eligible to become Greek citizens? Were the Greek deputies representing the Greeks of "yonder" Greece Greeks too, and was the Greek monarch the King of the Greeks of this "yonder" Greece, as well? How could freedom of religious affiliation and faith permit

prohibition of proselytizing in all but the “predominant” Eastern Orthodox faith? To these and other important questions no clear answers could be provided by the National Assembly and the Constitution. Surprisingly liberal in giving the vote to practically all males of voting age, the constitution showed the limits of a clear liberal orientation in the definition of Greek national identity and citizenship.

The National Assembly, in which the old order had won a dominant presence and position, prepared the ground for the reappearance of tried politicians like Colettis and Mavrocordatos in the role now of political leaders aiming to win a majority in the first Parliament. The leaders of the Russian party were not yet in a position to challenge their opponents, although they could appeal to a much more numerous electorate than the French and the English parties, because they could not master a crowd of followers, a field in which Colettis proved a very effective leader. Indeed, Colettis was able to move his followers from town in Rumely, which was the base of his political power, manipulating the electoral law which allowed the general elections to be held throughout the spring and summer of 1844. Colettis projected himself as the dominant political leader on the political scene in Greece and showed the ways in which a populist leader could manipulate the system to win a march on his opponents, leaving to posterity the prototype of Greece’s populist leader.

Colettis formed the first parliamentary government of independent Greece and inaugurated a type of rule described as a “centrist” government: in an effort to stay in power and, lacking a party based on a program and stable principles and membership, the former medical servant of Ali Pasha performed a political tight-rope act. He avoided putting forward serious though badly needed changes in the economic and social fields, so as not to harm and estrange vested interests, and at the same time rotated in government positions trusted friends and would-be friends by offering favors or promises of favors to friend and foe alike. Colettis was able for three years, until his death in 1847, to prevent the formation of strong opposition groups which would threaten the stability of his regime. One element which would threaten his government, the captains and their armed retainers, was allowed a free hand in the frontier zone, in which they exercised their talents and, no less useful for the stability of his regime, they were used to project such forays into the irredenta as proof of the government’s devotion to the vision of liberating the unredeemed brethren across the frontier.

These tactics did not really amount to a “centrist” policy, but to a policy of doing as little as possible and to offering to the public grandiose schemes and visions of greatness and to politicians of all parties positions of power and influence or promises of positions. This policy did not aim at solving social and economic problems; it did contribute, however, to governmental stability, which was not without a benefit to society at large, but with a price – social and economic stagnation.

Colettis, by inaugurating these political tactics, essentially gave new life to the old order, which, with the added legitimacy secured by its members who were now deputies of the Greek Parliament, increased dramatically their power and influence. Their authority now was not given by a Turkish pasha but by the Greek people through democratic election. In this new aspect of their authority one can discern some of the principal weaknesses of constitutional government in nineteenth-century Greece. Elections, in districts in which voters were mostly illiterate peasants tied to a number of local families with bonds of economic and social dependence, became a powerful weapon in the hands of local families which had exercised authority in the past, in the name of the Ottoman Sultan. To prevent their return to positions of power and influence Capodistria, no less than King Otto, had refused to grant a constitution, but the times favored their opponents.

Another serious weakness, which became apparent as soon as constitutional government was introduced, was the inability of the country to produce stable political parties with stable and distinct programs and differentiated followings. The three existing “parties” referred to earlier were loose and unstable electoral formations around a leader, which did not survive that leader, and indeed did not survive two consecutive elections. The predominantly peasant society of Greece was unable to produce a peasant political party. Physical fragmentation and lack of communications, which favored regional bonds, were an impediment to the growth of a peasant party. Peasants, moreover, had been able since the days of the war of independence to encroach on national land, the land that had passed to the Greek state after independence. This land, which before independence belonged to the Ottoman state or various Muslim institutions, or private persons, became national and was held by the Greek state now as security against the foreign loans raised to wage the Revolutionary War. The state was never able to defend this national land, which became prey to peasants with the connivance of politicians.

Thus, a quasi-feudal regime before independence was quickly dislodged by the insurgent government, and the regime that resulted from the revolution allowed the former serfs to occupy lands formerly belonging to the Ottomans. The inability of the state to officially distribute these national lands, for the reason already mentioned, was circumvented by a quiet consensus to let peasants help themselves to the lands they cultivated as serfs. Later in the century, as will be seen, a government under a new king of Greece distributed titles to all peasants for the lands they had occupied, inaugurating thus a practice of periodically seizing all national lands. That has been the price of producing a class of landed peasants out of former serfs, circumventing the serious handicap already mentioned.

Forays into the irredenta and encroachments into the national lands diffused potentially dangerous situations, but their use required, especially into the former, careful handling, because they could easily get out of control and cause great damage. Greece's protecting powers naturally resented both practices of the Greek authorities, the irredentist forays because they threatened to disturb the peace in the region and did not allow the development of normal relations of Greece with the Porte, and the encroachments into national land, because they undermined the security of Greece's public debt, over which the country's foreign creditors were naturally very sensitive.

These practices had also a negative impact on Greece's European apprenticeship and image as a succession state issuing out of the Ottoman Empire, which was expected to leave behind such illegitimate practices. The requirements, however, of the Greek government and especially the need to stay in power allowed the authorities to have recourse to these practices. Colettis, master of deception and survival in office, left a legacy of recourse to such practices which, however, his successors in the government were not able always to manage and keep under control.

Colettis's passing away in 1847 inaugurated a period of instability and perilous adventures. The 1848 liberal revolutions in Europe did produce some tremors in Greece, too, but mostly of different directions and pursuits. With the exception of a rising on the island Cephalonia, which resembled those in other European countries, since Cephalonia and the other Ionian Islands had more stratified and developed societies than the society of the Greek Kingdom, the Revolution of 1848 in Greece amounted to a number of disturbances in Rumely caused by a

set of disaffected local captains. In vain did sympathetic Athens dailies tried to present the disturbances in the northern districts of the country in the light of the liberal revolutions in other European countries; the "Rebels of the constitution," as some of the leaders of the disturbances called themselves, followed a prescribed and time-honored course: they led their armed followers in and out of the irredenta across the frontier leaving behind a trail of rapine. They abandoned the "defense" of the constitution when they secured from the government an amnesty for themselves and their brigand followers.

The organized bandit disturbances were Greece's "Revolution of 1848," because the captains and their bandit horde of northern Greece were the only social and political element in a position to stage an armed show to blackmail the government and secure their immediate political ends. Short of an aristocracy and an industrial working class, Greece's peasants were under the tight control of local barons and divided into so many baronies. Mid-nineteenth-century Greece, before a mercantile class could take root in the country and a class of professionals could make their weight felt, was essentially a feudal society sporting a liberal constitution, which served the local barons more than it did the peasants under their tutelage.

The great Eastern Crisis of the Crimean War (1853–6) showed even more dramatically the limitations of the Greek political system to absorb necessary change and leave behind old practices. The great crisis began as the Greek press drummed up nationalist fever on the occasion of the four-hundredth anniversary of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. As war clouds gathered in the region the Greek press proclaimed the imminent beginning of the "Second War of Liberation" and the vision of the renaissance of the "Greek Empire," which was at hand. The Greeks of the irredenta were invited to revolt against their Turkish ruler, as the Orthodox Christians of southeastern Europe were expected to begin, under the leadership of Russia, a crusade to drive out of the region the Asiatic invaders. The ministers of Britain and France in Athens had good reasons to believe that Russian agents were familiar with the outbursts of nationalist and Philorthodox feelings in Greece.

The Crimean War was a turning point in the country's relations with the three protecting powers. Russia, although initially projecting itself as the champion of the Orthodox Christians of the East and supporting hostile activities among the Christians of the region against the Porte, eventually and as a result of the failure of the Christian risings to lead

to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, limited its support to the Slavs of the region in the future. Greece, as a result of this important shift in Russian policy, which contributed to a growing Slavophobia in the country, became increasingly attached to the British. A blockade of Greece's main port in Piraeus in 1854 by the British and French Mediterranean fleets, as a result of irredentist risings in Thessaly, Epirus, and Chalcidice against Turkish rule and at a time when Britain and France were at war with Russia and in alliance with the Porte (and a similar blockade in 1850, by the British, in support of the claims of a British subject by the name of Don Pacifico), convinced the Greek government that the country was obliged to be on good terms with the European power in control of sea communications in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the same Eastern Crisis, Greece was obliged by Britain and France to pursue, under a pro-western government headed by Mavrocordatos, placing relations with the Porte on a less unfriendly basis. In 1855, a treaty was signed between Greece and the Porte, which allowed the establishment of consulates in each other's territory, and in 1856 a treaty regulating frontier incidents, including the suppression of brigandage, was also signed between the two countries, after considerable pressure from Britain and France.

Amidst nationalist enthusiasm during the risings in the irredenta in the spring of 1854, and the subsequent disappointment and humiliation caused by foreign intervention and the dashing of irredentist hopes, most Greeks were not able to see that some changes long overdue were taking place. The generation of the war of independence was waning and a new generation was taking its place. During the crisis the three old political parties made their last show before receding to the shadows of history, as new politicians, more "European" and modern, posed themselves for action. Also by this time, some progress in Greece's commercial relations had contributed to the growth of a mercantile class and a busy and prosperous new port, Hermoupolis, on the Aegean island of Syros. The Greek merchant marine was slowly but surely changing from sail to steam, while the diaspora Greeks began making their activities and presence felt in international commerce. An intellectual and professional elite, the product of the University of Athens and the Military Academy, was also projecting itself onto the national scene.

These changes, and particularly the new political breed, did not leave intact the old political agenda. As in 1843, however, the shifts in the political agenda reflected the confluence of diverse forces, old forces no



less than new ones. Again, liberal forces coexisted with conservative ones in voicing demands of a political nature. Issues like the succession to a Catholic king and a Protestant queen were given great prominence by liberals no less than by conservatives, each expecting different political gains from their solution. Outside developments, like the *Risorgimento* in Italy (1859–60), influenced Greek political developments in unexpected ways. Italian unification did not turn Greek attention to the role played by Piedmont as a center of gravity in the Italian lands. Greece's German king instead was identified with the Hapsburgs of the northern Italian states and suffered as a result of this identification, as Greeks tended to identify with the Italian nationalists! In vain did King Otto try to dissociate himself from the Hapsburgs of Italy: he was a German, and Germans refused to let the Italians fulfill their destiny!

Even more Greeks seemed to resent the German royal couple for not producing an Orthodox heir to the Greek throne. Philorthodox circles made great noise about the prospect of one more "Latin" monarch for the country, successor to the childless royal couple. Otto's and Amalia's German siblings were paraded in the Greek press to drum up resentment against the "Latin" royal couple. Thus liberals and conservatives, irredentist and Philorthodox circles combined their attacks on the monarchy to destroy it this time. Without the ability to appeal directly to the people, King Otto awaited his demise. The three protecting and guarantor powers of Greece's independence and regime turned the other way whenever the beleaguered King of Greece turned to them for advice and assistance. Indeed, no sooner had the anti-dynastic movement in Greece gained strength than the three powers began searching for a successor dynasty for the country.

It took another revolt of the Athens garrison in October 1862 for the King of Greece and his queen to abdicate the Greek throne and leave the country. Otto and Amalia left Greece brokenhearted and not quite in a position to understand what had really gone wrong. It was not easy to explain at the time how a beloved royal couple, who had so much loved their adopted country and for whose sake they had given up so much in their own countries, could have ended up leaving in deep resentment and without proper adieux. It is still not easy to explain, short of settling down with such stereotypes as the fickleness of the Greeks or their supposed deeply embedded anti-monarchical sentiments, the sad end of a true romance of the people and their adopted

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king. It was not that the king had become, all of sudden, so unpopular that few Greeks were ready to shed a tear for him. It seems that those who engineered Otto's fall, internal no less than external opponents and enemies, had been able to make him a scapegoat for all the country's real or imagined misfortunes and, at the same time, to deny him effective appeal to his subjects. It seems also that the king was so shocked by the violent reaction against him and so disappointed by the ingratitude of his people that he left in despondency and deep disgust. One more Philhellene was forced to leave his adopted country thoroughly disenchanted, at a time when the West was no longer thrilled by Greece and produced few if any such Philhellenes.

## A NEW DYNASTY AND LINGERING PROBLEMS (1862–97)

The Wittelsbachs of Bavaria were out and the Glücksburgs of Denmark were in. Britain, France, and Russia, the three of them together officially but unofficially each one of them separately, took the case of the Greek throne from one European capital to another, even as the Greeks themselves played the game of hosting a European prince. It seems that from the start, the Greek press and those few who ran it or read it showed no real sentiment in favor of a republic, reflecting in this respect the sentiments of the general public. Those Greeks who had some knowledge of the world outside Greece knew that only the United States of America and Switzerland did not have a monarch, but that the former was a federation and the latter a confederation. The subject had been lightly touched upon during the war of independence; in a debate on the press of the time, somebody suggested that the Greeks import the constitution of the Anglo-Americans into Greece, to which another letter writer responded that for the US constitution to operate in Greece, one had to import the Anglo-Americans, as well.<sup>1</sup> The question of a republic had lived ever since only in the imagination of a handful of radicals in the Ionian Islands, which were still outside of Greece, but about to join the metropolis of the Hellenes.

Most Greeks appeared to favor the invitation of Prince Alfred, son of Queen Victoria, no doubt because Britain was expected to hand the Ionian Islands over to Greece. It seems that Britain did not discourage the Greeks from opting for Alfred, no doubt to rule out candidates supported by France or Russia, although the British prince was disallowed by the 1832 treaty, as were the princes of France and Russia. Indeed, Britain was now re-entering the Greek scene after a long estrangement caused by the blockade of 1854, by letting the Greeks understand that they were about to receive the Ionian Islands as a dowry to their next

monarch. The Heptanese, which Britain had taken control of during the Napoleonic wars but was ready to relinquish, were becoming a liability, on account of a strong movement for union with Greece.

Prince William Christian of Denmark, who became King George I of Greece, was a choice on which the three protecting powers agreed. He proved more successful than his predecessor in most respects. King George ruled over a less primitive country than King Otto. Greece in the 1860s was much more developed than the country in which the young prince from Munich arrived in the 1830s. Although Romanticism and Irredentism were still influencing national policy in a decisive way, they were harnessed more effectively than before by a class of professionals in the Foreign Ministry. A new generation of Greek representatives played the diplomatic game in a more professional way, while nationalist-cultural societies were better controlled by state representatives than before. Moreover, a confrontation between the Greek state and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in the 1870s and 1880s, for control over the drive to promote Greek education in the irredenta, ended with the Greek state imposing its priorities and will on the Church of Constantinople. The Greek nation-state would no longer allow the operation, in the crucial educational field, of ecclesiastical antagonists, and was resolved to tightly control all activities in this sensitive sector. Greece was locked in combat in the irredenta with the Slavs, and would not allow deviations from its definition of Greek national interest.

King George I proved himself a better politician than King Otto, and was able to better manipulate politicians than his predecessor. A new Constitution (1864), which proved with the necessary amendments a most enduring and successful parliamentary charter, allowed the king to have his way in the charting and direction of national policy. In the absence of distinct and enduring political parties, the king was able to encourage and manipulate the formation of loyal but unstable majorities in Parliament, until 1875, when the great reformer, Charilaos Trikoupis, obliged King George to accept the principle that the monarch would give the mandate to form a government to the leader of the party that had the majority in Parliament and would allow this leader to rule as long as he had the majority. This principle, as expected, favored the formation of more stable political parties than before. This turn in the constitutional history of the country, in conjunction with the new breed of politicians already mentioned, made possible the growth of political formations with more stable programs and agendas which

were less open to frequent change. Epaminondas Deligiorgis (1829–79), Alexander Koumoundouros (1815–83), Charilaos Trikoupis (1832–96), and Theodore Deliyannis (1824–1905), to name the most prominent political leaders of the second half of the nineteenth century, presided over the transition of Greece to a more regulated and less volatile political life.

The incorporation of Ionian Islands in 1864, which were handed over by Britain, did contribute to a more stable political life than before, in the sense that parliamentary intercourse improved dramatically, due to the infusion into politics of educated parliamentarians on a level of political exchange much higher than the average Greek politician of the time. Parliamentary debates were no longer irredentist tirades or venomous exchanges between local political barons, but acquired a more elevated aura of intercourse among political groups competing for political power and influence, according to rules of political exchange cultivated in the West. Greek parliamentary life seemed to be maturing and becoming richer than hitherto.

The new political system, however, although less unstable than the old one, was still unable to give the country governments able to weather storms, internal no less than external, with minimum cost to the country's credibility and institutions. Two major crises of the period, which taxed Greece's ability to manage crises were: i) a revolution in Crete against Ottoman rule and for union with Greece (1866–9), and ii) the establishment in 1870, by Ottoman imperial decree, of a Bulgarian national church as a splinter of the Ecumenical Church of Constantinople.

The revolution in Crete was one of a series of such revolutions against Ottoman rule. In 1821, in 1840 again, on the occasion of the Eastern Crisis of 1839–1841 which brought the Ottoman Empire close to its fall, in 1854, on the occasion of the Crimean War, and now once more the Cretans were up in arms, with the encouragement of a sizeable Cretan refugee community in Greece and of irredentist circles, demanding union with Greece. The Cretan uprisings had already created a tradition of revolt against Ottoman rule. A lesser known consequence of those Cretan uprisings was the following: after each such uprising and its suppression, there followed a wave of mass Islamization of Christians. These new Muslims tended to be very fanatically anti-Christian and tyrannical masters, even more oppressive at a local level than the Turkish authorities, who were notorious petty tyrants. By 1866,

and especially by the end of the nineteenth century, this vicious circle of oppression, revolt, and suppression and even greater oppression made Crete one of the most troubled islands of the Mediterranean. Perennial violence, irredentism, the inability of the Porte to pacify the island, and great European power intervention made the Cretan question a hard nut to crack.

The Cretan Revolution of 1866–9 was a classic Greek irredentist uprising of the nineteenth century: the valor of the rebels and the religious hatred of both sides was one defining feature of the revolution, the wanton destruction of life and property was another. Shipments of men and ammunition from Greece to the embattled island did not pass unnoticed by the great European powers and the Porte. Britain, France, and Italy, one of the “hungry” new powers according to Bismarck, vied with each other for a position of influence with both the Porte and Athens, fanning at the same time the flames of war with threats to intervene. The revolution was suppressed between two Prussian wars, the Austro-Prussian (1866) and the Franco-Prussian war (1870), with the great European powers unable to put an end to the bloodshed. Heroic deeds and sacrifice added to the Greek pantheon of heroes and martyrs and prepared the ground for the next Cretan revolt. Irredentist apostles in Greece added a note of ridicule: In 1867 they shipped to Crete a good sample of Continental Greek brigands with the promise of rich plunder in the island of Minos. When the fighting was over, the Turks of Crete rounded up the swift-footed predators from Greece and shipped them back by boat, causing alerts at all the boat’s ports of call, until it reached its destination on the Greco-Turkish frontier in the Ionian Sea, and causing George Finlay to condemn Greece for turning Crete into, as he put it, a “penal colony.”

No less enduring and even more serious was the impact on Greek national policy of the crisis caused by the establishment in 1870 of the Bulgarian national church. Bulgarian national “awakening” by this time had progressed so much that this awakening alarmed both Greece and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, because Bulgarian nationalists claimed for themselves Macedonia and Thrace, which Greece considered both “Greek historical lands” and safe national preserves. Perhaps no other issue so greatly taxed Greek efforts to claim for Greece and win over Greek “historical lands” as the question of the future of Macedonia did. With no support from Russia or Britain and France, or from Serbia, and with its relations with the Porte at their lowest

possible level, on account of the Cretan Revolution, Greece faced the crisis alone and was prepared to realize all the parameters of the question at hand.

But what was Bulgaria at the time and what was Macedonia? The Greeks were amongst the first to define these lands since the beginning of the century. For educated Greeks, Macedonia was the historical Greek land of kings Philip and Alexander the Great, but its northern limits were the extended boundaries of Roman times, as set down by the learned geographer of the first century AD Strabo on Scardus Mts or Shar Planina, well to the north of the boundaries in Philip's time. To the uneducated Christian inhabitants, Greeks and Bulgarians, Macedonia was yet unknown. The land was inhabited by Greeks and Hellenized Albanians, Vlachs and Bulgarians or Bulgarized South Slavs, as well as Jews and Turks. The Greek language was dominant in the south, as well as in northern cities, while the Bulgarian language was dominant in the north and particularly in the villages. The South Slavs of the land were generally referred to as Bulgarians; so did they call themselves until the twentieth century, when they became Slav Macedonians, i.e. Slavs of Macedonia. That is the name by which they entered their national history and that of the region. By the time, however, that the Slavs of Macedonia claimed an identity distinct from the Bulgarian, the Serbian, or the Greek, the history of Macedonia, its heroes and its martyrs, its myths and its past had been parceled out among the first comers in the field of carving out national identities and historical claims to the land. As will be seen, the late coming of the Slav Macedonians in the very competitive field of national identities and historical rights to land, complicated further an already complicated situation.

Until 1870, the Greeks called the Slav Macedonians Bulgarians, and meant by that name brother Christians whose mother tongue was Bulgarian. When, however, the Bulgarians claimed a distinct national identity and a separate church from the Greeks and claimed, at the same time, the Slavs of Macedonia as Bulgarian brethren, the Greeks referred to the "Bulgarians" of Macedonia as Slavs of Macedonia or Slav-Macedonians. History and archaeology were mobilized to deny the Slavs of Macedonia to the Bulgarians and to claim them for Greece as Greeks who had been Slavicized. Ever since this challenge from the Bulgarians took shape, no other issue regarding the past and its interpretation has taxed Greek scholarship so much.

The Macedonian question, as the issue of the future of Macedonia came to be known, also taxed Greece's foreign relations. In at least four great crises, which led to two Balkan wars in 1912 and 1913 and to two world wars in 1914 and 1939, the question of the future of Macedonia or parts of it played a significant role in Greece's relations with its neighbors, as well as with the great powers of the time. The land of King Philip and Alexander the Great, which around the time of the war of independence was considered by southern Greeks a distant land of "Yonder" Greece, was now seen as a frontier Greek land essential to the very existence of Greece.

The "struggle" for Macedonia became the dominant issue of Greece's foreign policy. What the Serbs called "Southern Serbia" and the Bulgars "Western Bulgaria," the Greeks considered "Northern Greece." The Greeks had the oldest "historical" rights to the land, at a time when the principle of "prior tempore, fortior juris" appeared to be taken seriously, irrespective of the inhabitants of the land. Naturally, Greece's competitors based their claims principally on the language of the Slav Macedonians and their rights to the land they inhabited, as well as on historical rights deriving from pre-Slav inhabitants absorbed by the Slavs. Archaeology, folklore and history were mobilized to support national rights and claims, but above all competitors, the Bulgars no less than the Greeks and the Serbs, tried hard to get control of churches and schools, which were in the hands of community councils and clergy. Never before or, for that matter, ever since did Macedonia witness so much educational and cultural activity. Every little village sported a primary school and every town, in addition to schools, a cultural society, Greek or Bulgarian in the south and the northeast, Serbian in the northwest. The principal target group were and have remained ever since the Slavs of Macedonia, which became the "Apple of Discord." Another target group, though not so viciously contested on account of early Hellenization, were the Vlachs of the region, whom the Romanians claimed as their brethren on the basis of their Latin tongue.

Unavoidably, though not without resistance, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople agreed to work closely with the Greek consuls in the region. They instructed its metropolitans to appoint new prelates who were ready to cooperate with the representatives of Athens in the struggle against the Bulgarians in the church and school system. A proud Ecumenical Patriarch in the person of Joachim III, was determined to preserve the Patriarchate's prerogatives and clashed in



the 1880s with Greek Prime Minister Trikoupis, who was equally determined to bring the Constantinople Church establishment to shore up Greece's national effort to realize its claims in the contested regions of Macedonia and Thrace. Athens, the new national center of the Greeks, brought the old national center into line in what was seen as a struggle for the sheer existence of the nation.

It is not easy to explain the magnitude of the Greek drive to secure the nation's claims in Macedonia. No other Greek historical land fired the people's imagination and passions so much as Macedonia. A land, little known to the people who first defined Greece's northern frontiers in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, came to signify in the second half of the same century the country's most cherished national goal. Greece's very future and prosperity were identified with the realization of this goal. Trikoupis, who could not possibly be identified with irredentist circles was convinced – or so he said in Parliament in 1855 – that Macedonia was absolutely vital for Greece's security and prosperity.

Macedonia and its future acted as a catalyst in Greek national policy. In conjunction with, and perhaps as a result of a wave of Slavophobia that shook the country, Greece's preoccupation with Macedonia drove what appeared to be a permanent wedge in the country's relations with Bulgaria. The Bulgars, who before the war of independence were seen as brethren who were Hellenizing themselves in both language and sentiments, were now turned into the nation's most feared enemy, as despised as the Turks had been for centuries. One consequence of this fear of Bulgaria, on account of Macedonia, was Greece's opting for Serbia's friendship and alliance, which proved a very difficult undertaking. Another consequence was even more filled with dangers for the future of Macedonia: Macedonia's Slav-speaking inhabitants, as already seen, were no longer Bulgars but Slav-Macedonians. It is ironic that the Greeks themselves were instrumental in the conception of the new nation to the north of Greece, which was to cause so much mischief to Greece in the second half of the twentieth century.

The year 1870 held in store for Greece another misfortune, which had been seen coming for a long time. In April of that year a party of distinguished foreign visitors, British and Italian, among them a British Lord, were captured by brigands on a visit to Marathon in the north of Attica. The captors threatened to put the captives to the knife if their demand for amnesty was not satisfied, which however was impossible to deliver, since the Greek Constitution of 1864 did not allow the king

to grant an amnesty to common criminals. British pressure on the Greek government to secure the release of the captives by any means, short of a chase of the outlaws which would put the lives of the captives into mortal danger, was unusually strong. It is ironic that Britain and its representatives in Greece had been critical in past days of the abuse of amnesty in the hands of Greek governments, which the new Constitution was expected to stop. Foreign government pressure and an outcry in the press, both domestic and foreign, for the safe release of the brigand captives, in conjunction with the requirements of Greek party politics, which placed the government of the country in a very difficult position vis-à-vis the opposition parties, led to the order to the army and gendarmerie contingents in Attica to chase the brigand captors, which resulted in the death of the captives before the captors themselves were cut down. The order to chase the brigand band was under the circumstances unavoidable, as was the slaughter of the captives by the brigands of the time and region, since brigand “law” obliged the outlaws to put their captives to death before they died themselves. A brigand band was held together by the fear exercised by the band in the region of operation. A band which lost a captive was a discredited band and could no longer operate at all.

Dilessi, the village near which the clash between the gendarmes and soldiers and the outlaws took place, became synonymous with disgrace, and the incident heaped on Greece much-deserved criticism. The incident revealed disturbing links connecting brigandage with politics, the security services, and even justice. The country had for too long accepted brigandage as an evil, condemned in public but tolerated for its irredentist uses. Edmond About’s brigand hero Hatzistavros, in his novel of 1853 *Le Roi des montagnes*, which had stung Greece badly in the days of the Crimean War (1854–6), reared his head on the Marathon field and presented Greece as a country infested with brigands, whom the authorities tolerated for their own reasons.<sup>2</sup>

The Dilessi murders, however, also caused much underserved abuse, directed at Greece by the foreign press, in particular the British press. The Greek authorities were vilified for having done what is expected of all state authorities: to pursue and suppress all outlaws. In view of past practice, legitimate questions were raised: Why pursue the brigands and put the lives of their captives in danger? Was the destruction of the brigands – and their captives – necessary to silence possible revelations of political intrigues? Why did the outlaws insist on being amnestied,

when they knew well that the monarch could not grant them amnesty? The arrogant chief of the brigands, Takos Arvanitakis, suggested to the emissaries that those who had made the constitution could very well unmake it and satisfy the brigand demand; the nation's representatives could even go to him and convene to pass the necessary amendments under his protection! He held "kings," he said, who could undo King George! Obviously, all parties concerned – foreign states, Greece's government and authorities, the brigands themselves – were "victims" of the constitutional ruling, which had been instituted to put an end to the state of anarchy produced by the abuse of amnesty.

Spain and Italy suffered no less than Greece from institutionalized brigandage, but these states were never condemned in the ways that Greece was at the time. George Finlay, whose property in Attica was the cause of much friction with the Greek authorities, sent to the *London Times* and the Edinburgh *Blackwood's Magazine*, very critical articles on Greece and its institutionalized brigandage. Greece was portrayed as a medieval country infested with outlaws of every description and unfit to be a member of the civilized countries of Europe.

Scathing criticism of Greece from the West had an unexpected impact: it produced a patriotic reaction and what was described as "ethnic" (better, "national") truth about the episode. The Dilessi murders were perpetrated by Albanian outlaws, by foreigners who had "invaded" Greece and committed the outrage to defame the country. In this "defense" of Greece against foreign press attacks, which was presented as a duty of every Greek who could write, many a Greek tried his hand at patriotic writing, leaving a legacy of half-truths and untruths which reflected a dark side of the country's intelligentsia. Foremost among these "defenders" of the honor of Greece was a young man living in London, John Gennadios, whose services to Greece eventually earned him the post of Greek ambassador to the Court of St James. In fine English prose Gennadios did his utmost to prove that foreign brigands had entered the country from the north and perpetrated the crimes; they were Albanians, as the name of the brother chiefs "Arvanitakis" "proved"! Arvanitakis, of course, was and still is a common Greek name, showing possible descent from Hellenized Albanians in the distant past. Gennadios and other Greek writers of the time and subsequent times, in an effort to silence well-deserved foreign criticism, became themselves and made the country the unexpected but willing "hostages" of the country's brigands. Descent into this nationalist

hysteria was checked in the summer of 1870, as a result of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War and the preoccupation of the foreign press with more important developments in Europe than Greek brigands.<sup>3</sup>

So came to an end an affair that demonstrated some extremely negative features of Greek public life. What was more disturbing than brigandage and its political connections was the drummed up “national” truth about the affair, which exercised the ideological and political terror required to silence all serious criticism of public life. Silenced criticism for serious blunders, or shortcomings of public services, in the name of “national” truth, tended to isolate the country from the rest of the world, and this isolation further increased the insecurity of Greek public figures, who were quick to see in foreign criticism a conspiracy against Greece.

In the economic sector, the country did make considerable progress. The long overdue distribution or, rather, the granting of ownership titles to the peasants for the lands they cultivated, in 1871 by the government of Alexander Koumoundouros, in conjunction with favorable international developments such as high prices for Greek currants and increased profits for Greek diaspora merchants, which became available for investment in Greece, made possible a modest take-off of the hitherto stagnant Greek economy. The turn of the Moreot peasants, however, away from cereal to currant production, made the country dependant on imports of foreign cereals and at the same time made the economy more vulnerable than before to international crises. On the other hand, the granting of ownership titles to illegal landholdings became a precedent for frequent recourse to similar practices, which proved detrimental to the prestige of the Greek state, as they encouraged illegal seizure of national land with impunity.

Cereal imports enhanced the importance of the port of Piraeus, but had a negative effect on the balance of payments, whose deficit was exacerbated by the recurrent irredentist adventures of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The inability to service Greece’s outstanding external debt proved detrimental to the country’s credibility and made raising new foreign loans almost impossible. The recourse to domestic loans to finance irredentist uprisings in Crete and Macedonia became common practice.

A new problem arose in 1881, when Greece acquired Thessaly from the Porte, after long and painful negotiations. The acquisition of Thessaly, as a result of a ruling by the 1878 Berlin Treaty of the great

European powers, which granted the district to Greece, secured for the latter a welcome breadbasket but also an unwelcome problem. The large landholdings of Thessaly, which were bought just before acquisition by Greek diaspora merchants and bankers, added to Greece a peasant population deprived by the new legal regime of all rights to the lands they cultivated under the Ottoman regime. Landless share-croppers attracted the attention of radical politicians, but the radicalization of the local peasantry in the decades that followed did not contribute to a general peasant radicalization. Radicalism in Thessaly, anyway, proved short-lived and declined after the expropriation and distribution of land estates in the first decades of the twentieth century.

More destabilizing in the 1870s and 1880s than brigandage and peasant radicalism was by far irredentism and particularly the Macedonian question. Public opinion was stirred up by perception of the Slavic threat to Greece's interests in Macedonia. Bulgarian irredentist activities in the region made the threat credible and pressing. On the occasion of the Eastern Crisis of 1875–8, the Greek government tried to rein in the irredentist bands, as the great European powers counseled in so many words, but reining in these bands was not an easy undertaking. Besides, irredentist barons were not strangers among government circles. On the occasion of the 1877–8 Russo-Turkish War, in addition to bands crossing into Macedonia from Thessaly, Greek army regular units crossed into the contested region, just as the war was coming to an end in early 1878, but before news of the Russo-Turkish armistice reached the Greek capital. For a brief spell there was fear in government circles that the Turkish army and navy, free from the engagement with the Russian army and naval forces, would opt for punishing Greece. Eventually, however, Greece's protecting powers intervened and prevented a reopening of hostilities in the region, with the intention of containing a serious crisis and preventing Russia from making permanent capital of its recent successes against Turkey. Britain, France, and Germany were eager to undo most of Russia's successes in the field, in a great power congress held in Berlin in June 1878, under the presidency of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, and were able to scrap most of them in the Treaty of Berlin of the same year. Greece was granted Thessaly and a small part of south Epirus by the Berlin treaty. By the same treaty of the great European powers, a Bulgarian Principality was founded to the north of Macedonia and Thrace, in other words much smaller than the

Bulgaria created by the previous Russo-Turkish treaty of San Stefano, which had been imposed on the Porte by victorious Russia.

The acquisition of Thessaly, instead of decreasing the pressure of irredentism on public life, increased this pressure now that Greece's northern frontier ran parallel to contested Macedonia. Bands of all possible description, as well as nomadic shepherds, who were no less predatory than brigands, crossed the frontier from both directions and caused or threatened to cause serious mischief to both countries. A new crisis of the Eastern question arose in 1885, on the occasion of the union of Eastern Rumelia (Northern Thrace) with Bulgaria, which was interpreted by both Serbia and Greece as a departure from the Berlin treaty settlement and adequate reason for equal compensation to both countries. Serbia and Bulgaria headed for a confrontation, which led to war in September 1885 and to Serbia's resounding defeat. Austria saved Serbia from losing territory to Bulgaria, while Britain forced the Porte to recognize the acquisition of Eastern Rumelia by Bulgaria. Russia was again the loser, while Greece kept complaining about its exclusion from the new settlement and was left with its armed forces mobilized.

Greek concerns over developments in Bulgaria had to do with the sizeable Greek community in Eastern Rumelia, especially in the district of Philippoupolis, as well as with Bulgaria's proximity to Macedonia, following the acquisition of Eastern Rumelia. Greece's prime minister Theodore Deliyannis, in spite of great-power opposition to the country's threat to go to war, increased the mobilized strength of the army and the navy. By April 1886, the Greek government and opposition parties had allowed public opinion to make them hostages of powerful irredentist circles. Public opinion clamored for war against Turkey, and all that Deliyannis could do was to await the intervention of the great European powers and then cave in. This intervention did materialize in the same month, and it was a relief for Deliyannis, who presented himself as a victim of the naval blockade of all Greek shipping to demobilize its land and sea forces, and the Greek government complied with the order, ending the long and costly "armed begging," as the policy of armed blackmail came to be known at the time. Deliyannis was only too glad to resign and play the victim while a sizeable number of his deputies abandoned him for Trikoupis.

But the army units on the frontier had a surprise in store for the Greek government: patriotic army officers ordered their units to cross the frontier into Macedonia, even as Trikoupis was presiding over the

demise of the Deliyannis party. Before more sober counsels prevailed, the Turks were able to lure the invaders into a trap, seizing some 280 men prisoners and parading them in the region to disgrace them. Trikoupis ordered the recalcitrant army back and implored the great powers to intervene for the release of the Greek soldiers; this they did and, at the same time, terminated the brief blockade of Greek ports, which they had imposed to prevent the government from causing a new conflagration in the region. So ended Deliyannis's "peaceful war," which cost Greece, in addition to precious funds, much face in its relations with the Porte and the great European powers.<sup>4</sup>

A new rising of the Cretans in 1896 obliged the Greeks to send military aid to the island, thus provoking hostilities with the Ottoman Empire along their shared borders. In the war of 1897 their troops were summarily defeated by a German-trained Ottoman army in the Plain of Thessaly. Greece was forced to accept an international control commission to guarantee that it paid a large war indemnity. The International Financial Control established itself in the country for several decades, ensuring that the Greek economy would yield enough to service its foreign debt. Crete, which had been an apple of discord between Greeks and Ottomans, was finally granted autonomy in 1898 after joint pressure on the sultan from Britain, France, Italy, and Russia.<sup>5</sup>

## DISTRIBUTION OF LAND AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE SEGMENTARY SOCIETY

Before the Greek state took over the Ottoman estates, large landowners produced cereals while small family units pursued self-sufficiency. Independence and the transfer of ownership to the Greek state transformed the entire structure of agricultural production. As squatters gradually fragmented state land into small landholdings, production shifted into crops for export.

Between 1830 and 1840 close to 64% of the population were farmers, 12.2% were stock breeders, 12% were traders, and 6.8% were labeled as “technicians.” The rest were professionals and civil servants. Of all arable land, 70.7% belonged to the state and 83% of the 120,000 peasant families were landless and worked as share-croppers.

The Peloponnesian currant, or raisin of Corinth, intensively cultivated on family plots, was the major export item. Patras mainly, but also Nauplion, Kalamata, and Navarino were the largest ports of the currant trade. The island of Syros was the center of international commerce between east and west and a junction of Black Sea wheat exports to Western Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Subsistence farming was the occupation of the Greek majority until the end of the nineteenth century. The improvement of communications by Charilaos Trikoupis allowed larger quantities of export crops to find their way abroad. Greece’s dependence on imported cereals however did not abate.

Ioannis Capodistria, as the first President of Greece, believed that the peasantry would be integrated into the new order through land grants.<sup>2</sup> His untimely death postponed land distribution for several decades. King Otto and his Bavarian regency were confronted in 1833 with empty coffers and accumulated debts, and their anxiety to satisfy foreign creditors and meet rising expenses led them to “grasp at the



national property as a fiscal panacea."<sup>3</sup> In other words, the sale of public land would provide funds with which to pay off foreign debts.

Armansberg, the most influential of the regents, who managed public affairs while Otto was still a minor, intended to raise income "for the endowment of Greek families."<sup>4</sup> The regency also had high hopes of land-leases of varying length, but the results were disappointing. Few families responded to the endowment scheme, the property leased was mismanaged, and the public domain was constantly depleted through usurpation and encroachment.

The National Assembly which met after Otto's deposition included in the 1864 constitution a mandate to future governments to legislate for a new distribution program. Sotirios Sotiropoulos, minister of finance in several cabinets between 1864 and 1888, became the chief architect of the distribution laws of 1871. These consisted of two related measures, one to distribute arable land, and the other to legalize the arbitrary planting of vines and trees on national land. As a result, the government of Alexander Koumoundouros recognized illegal holdings, and granted titles to nearly 50,000 peasant families – a process facilitated by conversion from Ottoman to Roman-Byzantine principles of tenure. The rule of usurpation in Roman law reversed the Ottoman inalienability of public land and made possible the recognition of squatters' rights after 30 years of occupation and use. The absence of a land registry and official tolerance allowed squatters to present their holdings as a freehold. Capodistria's vision of a society of smallholders was thus vindicated 40 years after his death. However, the Greek state missed the opportunity to enhance its credibility by distributing the land itself rather than merely recognizing a *fait accompli*.

The Koumoundouros distribution of titles and the ensuing proliferation of small family plots further encouraged Greek agriculture to specialize in a few export items. Thus the production of currants dominated the Peloponnese at the expense of cereals. During the 1870s currant exports made up more than half of the value of all exports. Cereals declined from 41% in 1845–6 to 38% in 1860, and plummeted to 23.7% in 1880–1. The domestic demand for wheat imports allowed Piraeus to overtake Hermoupolis on the island of Syros as the state's busiest port.<sup>5</sup>

The dispute over the exploitation of the silver and lead mines of Lavrion attracted wide attention in the early 1870s and took the Greek public on a spree of speculation. In 1864 a Franco-Italian firm (Roux-Serpieri) purchased mining rights from the Greek state, but it was soon

discovered that the agreement did not clarify whether the company's rights included the surface remnants of previous extractions or were confined to mining ore from the pits. The dispute between the company and the Greek state raged for two years (1871–3) until a magnate from Constantinople, Andreas Syngros, bought the entire concern. This caused a buying spree of the company's shares which made their price skyrocket. The subsequent crash wiped out the savings of many small- and middle-ranking investors and introduced the Greeks to the workings of European stock exchange bubbles and their tendency to burst when over-blown.

The chronic balance of payments deficit was exacerbated by the irredentist adventures of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Outstanding external debts precluded the issue of new loans, gave rise to a series of domestic loans to finance the uprisings in Crete and created a vicious circle of servicing old debts by contracting new ones. The servicing of the war of independence debt was discontinued during the reign of King Otto – to the detriment of Greece's creditworthiness. The Greek minister in London, Ioannis Gennadios, eventually reached a settlement with creditors in 1873–8, which restored the country's credibility in the international markets.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 4.1** Loans from 1880

	<i>Nominal</i>	<i>Real</i>
1880	120,000,000	74,000,000
>>	9,000,000	9,000,000
1884	100,000,000	63,353,759
1885	30,000,000	2,709,168
>>	18,000,000	18,000,000
>>	75,615,000	75,615,000
1887	135,000,000	90,990,000
1888	15,000,000	9,990,000
1889	30,000,000	20,437,500
>>	125,000,000	91,268,827
1890	45,000,000	40,050,000
1891	15,000,000	13,000,000
1892	16,500,000	10,999,980
1892	20,000,000	16,934,187
Total in franks	754,215,000	539,448,421

From 1880, the addition of the territory of Thessaly to the Greek realm generated new spending on works of infrastructure and a renewed spree of borrowing. The nominal amount owed to Greece's creditors before 1880 amounted to 256 million francs. To this amount were added the following sums.<sup>7</sup>

Although Greece borrowed heavily, a substantial amount of the loans that were contracted abroad served to finance a significant network of roads, many miles of railway tracks, a small but effective navy, and fast growing commercial channels.

The national budget by 1893 presented the following picture:<sup>8</sup>

The acquisition of the Thessaly breadbasket in 1881 increased Greek territory by 26.7 percent and its population by 18 percent but added a new problem to the existing ones. Many large Ottoman landholdings were brought by Greek diaspora magnates before Thessaly became part of Greece, and the peasant population ceased under the new legal regime to be attached to the land their fathers had cultivated and were driven to seek employment elsewhere. The waves of displaced sharecroppers in search of their promised land created a radical movement that kept the government awake at nights.

**Table 4.2** Income

	<i>Drachmas</i>
Indirect taxation	22,110,634
Taxes on consumption	36,003,000
Tariffs	19,538,907
Monopolies	11,342,806
Assets from public property	3,953,232
Sales of public property	2,976,674
Other assets	1,551,000
Tariffs from lighthouses	450,000
Telegraph service	500,000
Assets from education	3,401,200
Police	1,800,000
Various	5,558,000
Total regular assets	109,185,453
Special assets	306,000
National roads	1,000,000
Total of special assets	1,306,000
Total income	110,491,453

**Table 4.3** Expenditures

	<i>Drachmas</i>
Interest of national debt	35,468,596
Endowments	131,899
Pensions	4,893,000
Royal endowment	1,325,000
Parliament	504,258
Foreign Affairs Ministry	1,916,658
Justice Ministry	4,589,951
Ministry of Interior	8,904,758
Ministry of Religion	6,924,104
Ministry of Army Affairs	14,364,230
Ministry of Navy	5,034,254
Ministry of Finance	1,776,075
Administration	8,105,011
Various expenditures	1,863,000
Total regular expenditures	95,800,797
Expenditures for national debt	8,690,656
Total expenditures	104,491,453

Price fluctuations of currants had an immediate effect on the livelihood of the small farmland cultivators who were at the mercy of moneylenders till harvest time. Single-crop cultivation in southern Greece was mainly induced by the blight that devastated French vineyards in the 1870s and spurred Greek farmers into attempting to fill the vacuum in the market. Currant production increased from 43,000 tons in 1861 to 100,700 tons in 1878. Improvements in transport and later, in 1880, the abolition of the tithe (one-tenth of production withheld by taxation) encouraged farmers to increase their production.

However, when the French vineyards recovered, the effect on Greece's agrarian economy and indeed its society, was long-lasting. As French production returned to normal in the 1890s, the demand for Peloponnesian currants contracted, generating ever-increasing unsaleable surpluses. When France imposed a high tariff on imports from Greece in 1892, the price of currants plunged by 70 percent in the London market. Despite efforts by the Greek government to relieve the plight of bankrupt peasants, thousands migrated to the United States.

Throughout the nineteenth century the state remained the exclusive arbiter of the Greek economy. The foreign loans of the first 45 years of

independence rarely found their way into public works of infrastructure. The bulk of loans financed administrative costs, the military budget, and the servicing of the loans. It was only between 1880 and 1892 that significant investment in railroads and road construction was put into effect by Charilaos Trikoupis. Compared to 1833–72, with a yearly average of 1.2 percent of public expenditure allocated for works of infrastructure, the 1890–1 years, with 18 percent for such works, became a landmark of Greek development. The benefits of rail and roads for the economy were long-lasting but the strain these works posed on the national budget and the ability of the state to continue its lending-spree, led to the default of 1893.<sup>9</sup>

Between 1876 and 1884 the national debt doubled. Three years later it had quadrupled and, by 1893, it was seven times the amount it had been 17 years earlier. Much of the growth was due to problems between Greece and Turkey and the extra expenditure in military preparedness they generated. The defense budget however would usually grow in periods of crisis, but the steady increase in the cost of running an ever-expanding unitary state constituted a growing burden on the foreign debt that was difficult to manage. A politically influential middle class of state functionaries made sure that state expenditure seldom contracted.

Greek magnates of the diaspora maintained a prominent role in securing foreign loans. Their commissions from successful negotiations often returned to Greece in the form of generous public donations. The “national benefactors” were also directly involved in import–export trade and in most banking activities in Greece.<sup>10</sup> The “national benefactors” of the diaspora were mainly a nineteenth-century phenomenon. Georgios Averov, who contributed a substantial amount toward the purchase of the heavy cruiser that would bear his name in 1910, was one of the last of his kind. The paramount role of the diaspora magnates withered as the twentieth century advanced. Postwar Greek shipping tycoons of London and New York put considerable distance between their interests and that of the Greek state. Aside from their place of birth, such as the islet of Oinousses off the coast of Chios, they made themselves inconspicuous in Greece. The Onassis and Niarchos foundations are a partial revival of the “national benefactors” tradition.

Given the precarious state of the Greek economy it is interesting to note that the drachma remained remarkably stable from 1830 to 1886. The rapid devaluation of the drachma between 1889–1905 temporarily

improved the chronic problem in the balance of payments but the deficit persisted even beyond the century. Inflation remained low until 1890 when it suddenly jumped to 13.5 percent.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the century fiscal policy operated under conditions of a free-market economy and tariffs were imposed on imports and even exports, as a source of state revenue rather than as a manifestation of protectionism. Foreign trade was conducted in a state of oligopoly. Five items alone represented 50–70 percent of the total value of foreign trade. The largest part of imports consisted of wheat and charcoal, the first shipped from the Black Sea region to the island of Syros. Lead, currants, and olive oil were the main Greek export items. The port of Patras, Greece's window to the West, was the foremost point of currant exports and, during the product's crisis, the springboard of Peloponnesian migration to the USA. Between 1870–2 lead exports from Lavrion constituted 11.6 percent of total exports.

Shipping, devastated by the war of independence, stagnated for almost half a century. The transition from sail to steam was another impediment to its growth. By 1895 however, Greek-owned ships exceeded a quarter of a million tons and ranked among the 12 largest fleets internationally. Be that as it may, their role was minor in the development of the Greek economy.<sup>12</sup>

## THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: AN OVERTURE

Three years before the turn of the century, a military defeat by the Ottoman army in Thessaly questioned the role of the Greek state as the champion of the Greek nation. Three years after 1900 the dynamic presence of Bulgarians in Ottoman-ruled Macedonia convinced the Greeks that the Slavic challenge required a drastic revision of relations with Turkey. Thus 1897 and 1903 generated a new outlook among the policymakers of Greece and a new content in the national ideology of the Greeks.

The Greek diplomats and officers who plunged into the struggle for a credible claim on the Ottoman *vilayets* of Monastir and Salonica, better known to outsiders as Macedonia, viewed this as an escape from the mundane realities of the Greek state. Having failed to attain their irredentist claims in conventional warfare, many officers turned irregulars, trying to recapture the heroic spirit of 1821 and its methods of irregular warfare. In this way they hoped to exonerate themselves from the humiliation of 1897 and eventually be remembered as the liberators of Macedonia.

The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) was founded in 1893 by Bulgarian nationalists who, although secular, cooperated nevertheless with the Exarchate Church of Bulgaria. IMRO's major achievement, the Ilinden rising in western Macedonia in 1903, was put down with ferocity by the Ottoman forces. A year later the Greek commander of the irregulars in western Macedonia, Pavlos Melas, was killed in the village of Statista by the Turks.<sup>1</sup> His death sent a wave of Greek volunteers flowing into Macedonia and made it impossible for Greek governments to ignore the issue. Between 1904–8 Greek bands clashed with their IMRO opposite numbers and managed to dominate the field.

In agriculture the recovery of French vineyards from the destructive blight of 1870 dealt a serious blow to the currant-based economy of the Greek South. With French production returning to normal in the 1890s, the international demand for Peloponnesian currants and wine contracted, generating ever-increasing surpluses. Despite efforts by successive Greek governments to relieve the plight of bankrupt peasants, thousands of them migrated to the United States.<sup>2</sup>

On the eve of the twentieth century Greece's political landscape was a carryover from the last quarter of the previous century. The prevailing bipolar system survived with Theodore Deliyannis still at the helm of his party and Georgios Theotokis having replaced Harilaos Trikoupis who died in 1896. Theotokis won the elections of 1899 but his government fell victim to the riots of 1901 caused by an attempt by Queen Olga (a princess of the Russian court) to supervise the rendering of the Bible from the Hellenistic "koine," into colloquial demotic Greek. This was viewed, mainly by university students, as an attempt of pan-Slavic circles in Moscow to adulterate Greece's claim to its linguistic continuity.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1902 elections a third party under Alexander Zaimis became the balancing force in Parliament. Bipolarity, however, was restored in the elections of February 1905. The assassination of the aged prime minister, Deliyannis, outside Parliament on May 31, 1905, by a gambler protesting the closure of the casinos made the Crown the arbiter of party politics. King George chose Dimitrios Rallis on June 9, 1905, to assume the leadership of Deliyannis's party and that of the government. In November 21, 1905, Rallis resigned after losing his majority. Theotokis was given a mandate by the king to form a government which lasted until July 4, 1909.<sup>4</sup>

Socialist adherents abounded among the Greek intelligentsia but they never managed to gather sufficient votes to make it to Parliament. The "Sociological Society," founded in 1908, supported trade unionism and policies of income redistribution, but failed to make headway in a society of small landholders (with the exception of Thessaly), shopkeepers, and civil servants. Its founding members, Alexander Papanastasiou, A. Delmouzos, A. Mylonas, and Constantine Triantaphyllopoulos, among others, made their mark later mainly within Venizelos's Liberal Party.

The traumatic memory of 1897 generated a wide-ranging discourse aimed at salvaging the imperiled nation from the blunders of an



ineffectual state. Throughout the decade that followed the Greek defeat by the Ottomans in Thessaly, exponents of irredentism came to the realization that internal reforms were a precondition for national regeneration. Some officers, such as Athanasios Souliotes-Nicolaides, went so far as to disclaim the existence of an independent Greek state altogether and look instead toward a multinational "Eastern Empire" as an environment ideal for the flourishing of Greek culture.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Coup of 1909**

The *pronunciamento* (display of force) of 1909 was the first autonomous political action ever taken by the Greek military. Yet so unaccustomed were they in pressing their demands on the state that the 250 conspirator officers who gathered in the barracks of the Goudi camp on the night of August 14, 1909, presented their grievances in the most timid and polite language. The next morning, the king and the government of Dimitrios Rallis were alerted to the fact that the military were protesting against political corruption, royal patronage in the armed forces, and mismanagement in public affairs. Without firing a single shot, the officers reaped an unexpected triumph as, one after another, the institutions of the state gave in to their demands. King George withdrew his princes from their commands, the government resigned, and Kyriakoulis Mavromichalis became prime minister with the approval of the "Military League" which had organized the coup.<sup>6</sup>

After searching for a nominal leader of their organization, the hard core of the "Military League," consisting mainly of military academy graduates, chose Col. Nikolaos Zorbas to assume its leadership. Zorbas, who had fallen foul of the Crown, had won the respect of educated officers for his outspoken criticism of the royal establishment in the army. As a former director of the Military Academy his word had a direct impact on cadets and young officers.

Following their success in Goudi, the military appealed to the Greek people for their support. This was granted to them most generously and unconditionally with the huge demonstration that took place on September 14, yet neither the military nor the politicians were able to find the road to salvation.<sup>7</sup>

Most European powers viewed the *pronunciamento* with hostility. The "International Financial Control" imposed on Greece as a consequence

of the 1897 war tried to ensure that no political turbulence or large military expenditure would be allowed to divert Greek resources from the orderly servicing of the country's foreign loans. None of the powers wished to see the Dynasty forced out by the more radical members of the "Military League" as this could become the first step leading to unforeseen developments. The British would suffer the loss of their avowed friend in King George and Germany theirs in the loss of the heir to the throne, Crown Prince Constantine.

Although the military shrank from overthrowing the civilian authorities, they nevertheless influenced the deliberations of Parliament between August 1909 and January 1910 and approved the passing of no less than 169 bills by the legislative body during that period. By the end of the year, however, tensions between the politicians and the military were running high. At that particular juncture members of the "League" invited to Athens Eleftherios Venizelos, a Cretan lawyer who had made his mark by opposing Prince George, the high commissioner of the island and second son of King George. Venizelos was asked to act as the political adviser to the "League." He arrived in Piraeus on January 10, 1910 and promptly advised his hosts to ease themselves out of power and supervise the transition to a parliamentary government, friendly to their reformist cause.<sup>8</sup>

## THE VENIZELIST DECADE (1910–20)

In January 1910, the Crown, the “Military League,” and the political parties agreed to revise the constitution according to Venizelos’s advice. The government of Mavromichalis gave way to a cabinet under Stephanos Dragoumis (father of Ion) with a mandate to propose constitutional revisions and then proceed to the election of a revisionary parliamentary assembly. It was time for Venizelos to return to Crete where he took part in the local elections of March and became the prime minister of the Cretan government. King George dissolved Parliament on the July 1 and proclaimed elections for August 8. The traditional parties received 65 percent of the seats, with Theotokis on top. The name of Eleftherios Venizelos was placed in the ballots by his admirers. He was elected first deputy of Attica and Boeotia without having officially taken part in the electoral campaign.

The revisionary assembly met on September 1 but lacked the cohesion that would allow it to fulfil its function. From the very beginning, public opinion was divided between a radical and a moderate revision of the constitution. Venizelos sided with the latter having already been given a mandate to form a government. From this position he persuaded the king to dissolve Parliament and hold new elections on November 28, 1910.<sup>1</sup>

The old parties considered the king’s initiative unconstitutional and abstained in protest. Participation at the polls however fell only by 8 percent compared to the previous elections and Venizelos won 307 out of the 362 deputies. His followers had already formed the “Liberal Party” in August. The “Agrarians” and the “Sociologists” were finally elected in Parliament as independent formations. About 87 percent of the assembly’s members were elected for the first time.

During his first seven months in office, Venizelos implemented his reformist platform; he carried through 53 amendments of the

non-fundamental articles of the constitution. These included the separation of the judiciary, the legislature, and the administration, the creation of a council of state, and a court of appeal for administrative cases, the exclusion of officers on active duty and civil servants from being elected to Parliament, the reduction of the lowest age for deputies from 30 to 25 years, and many others. The 1911 reform of the constitution had left intact its fundamental articles about the king acting as a guarantor of the parliamentary regime. Venizelos therefore restored a bipolarity in the relationship between the head of state and the head of government that Trikoupis had abolished.<sup>2</sup>

When Venizelos restored the damaged prestige of the monarchy after the 1909 coup had challenged its legitimacy, and reinstated King George's role in politics, he was placing his hopes entirely on the moderation and prudence of this particular monarch. For a brief period, between 1910 and 1913, Venizelos's supremacy went unchallenged, as the old parties had fallen into disrepute.

### **Foreign Affairs (1912–19)**

Various bilateral agreements between France and Russia on the one hand, and Britain and France on the other, as well as between Russia and Britain, led these powers to form a common front called the "Entente Cordiale." The aim of such an "Entente" was to confront Germany and Austro-Hungary. In 1894, France and Russia signed a secret Treaty of Alliance while Britain abandoned its policy of neutrality only when she became convinced that Germany's naval rearmament threatened the integrity of her empire. In April 1904, Britain signed an agreement with France settling their differences in the field of colonialist competition. In August 1907, Britain and Russia signed an agreement defining their respective zones of influence in Persia and their policies in Tibet and Afghanistan.

While the great powers were preoccupied with their differences and the building of alliances against each other, Italy took the opportunity to promote her plans of expansion at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. On September 29, 1911, the Italians declared war against the Ottomans and invaded the Tripoli area in Libya to protect – as they claimed – their nationals living there. The Turks' resistance against the Italian economic infiltration provided Italy with the excuse to launch



**Figure 6.1** Eleftherios Venizelos (1864–1936), reformer and statesman. Copyrighted by Harris & Ewing. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

her attack. The war lasted one year and helped Italy's expansion in the Mediterranean. With the Treaty of Ouchy in October 1912, Libya became an Italian protectorate. In May 1912, the Italians took over the Dodecanese, thus proving how vulnerable the Ottoman Empire really was. The war gave the opportunity to the inhabitants of Samos to rebel against Ottoman rule. Their exiled leader, Themistoklis Sofoulis, landed on the island on September 7, 1912, as head of a Greek volunteer force and chased away the Turkish garrison.

In the Balkans of 1912, the apple of discord, but also the reason for the temporary reconciliation among Serbs, Bulgars, and Greeks, was the process of sharing out the European territories of the Ottoman realm. The Italian–Turkish war, the Albanian insurgency, but also the perplexity of the great powers about their position in the Balkans, offered opportunities in this field.

The ordering of the heavy cruiser "Averof" by the "Military League" and its delivery to Greece by the Italian shipyard of Livorno in 1911 proved

to be the most judicious ever purchase of a vessel in the history of the Greek navy. One third of the purchase price for this cruiser was donated by George Averof, a rich Greek benefactor from Egypt. The control of the Aegean, made possible by this ship, offered Venizelos the strongest negotiating argument for Greece's participation in the Balkan alliance.

Montenegro, the smallest of the allies, was the first to declare war against the Ottomans. Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria followed suit on October 18, 1912. To start with, the Greek advance did not encounter any serious Turkish resistance. In Ellassona the Turks entrenched themselves in the mountain heights but had to retreat after an artillery duel. The attack on Sarantaporo cost the Greeks serious losses as once again the Turks escaped from the Greek pincer movement. Nonetheless, the Straits, which according to the German instructors of the Ottomans would become the graveyard of the Greek army, fell into the hands of the victors and opened their way to Thessaloniki. The commander-in-chief of the Greek forces, heir to the throne, Constantine, wanted to pursue the Turkish forces along the lines of Kailacia, Sorovitch, Florina, Monastir but was obliged to obey the order of Venizelos to turn toward Thessaloniki.

Thessaloniki was the major target of the Greek attack. The demographic character of this Macedonian capital on the eve of its liberation was as follows: In 1912 it had a population of 160,000 souls. Of those 50,000 were Balkan Christians (predominantly Greek), 61,500 Jews, and 45,000 Muslims while the rest were West Europeans as well as persons belonging to various other nationalities. In this international trade center, out of the 54 large trading companies, 38 belonged to Jews, 8 to Donmes (Islamised Jews), and 8 to Greeks. In the industrial sector the Greeks were more or less on a par with the Jews. The presence of westerners was mostly felt in the banking sector, with the British first and the French second.

The greatest, perhaps, military success during the common effort of the First Balkan War was the contribution of the Greek navy which, by shelling the Ottoman warships incessantly, blocked the supply of the Turkish forces by sea. On October 18, Captain Votsis sank, with his torpedo boat No. 11, the corvette "Fetich Bulent" inside the port of Thessaloniki. On November 9 the torpedo boat No. 4 obliged a Turkish gunboat to sink itself inside the port of Kydonia. The sea-battle of "Elli" on December 3, 1912, between the major ships of the two fleets took place at the exit of the Dardanelles.

“Averof,” commanded by Admiral Paul Koundouriotis, together with the other Greek vessels, obliged the Turks, in spite of their considerable firepower and constant maneuvering, to seek refuge in the safety of the Straits. The Greek fleet managed to secure control of the Aegean, thus allowing Greece’s allies to carry out their operations without any diversions from the seafront.

The sea-battle of “Lemnos” on January 5, 1913, completed the job of the “Elli” sea-battle. In its attempt to exit from the Dardanelles one morning, the Turkish fleet was confronted by “Averof” and the Greek fleet at a short distance from Cape Irini of Lemnos. By noon the Turkish ships were once again seeking shelter in the Straits, covered in smoke. The seizure of the Aegean Islands by Greek forces confirmed Greek supremacy on the seas. The liberation of the islands of Lemnos, Tenedos, Imvros, and Samothrace was completed without losses. However, the November landings in Lesbos and Chios and the siege of the Turkish guard cost the Greeks several casualties.

The mountain range of Bizani dominated all the passes that led into Ioannina from the south. Permanent artillery posts built under the supervision of the German mission pinned down, with their fire, every attempt at infiltration from the plain. The nature of the terrain and the firepower of the Turkish artillery rendered impossible any frontal attack against the Turkish strongholds. During the first month of the siege, the Greek army of Epirus disposed of only one division while the Turks had the 23<sup>rd</sup> independent Ioannina division under the able command of General Esat Pasha and one more division that had been constituted by mobilizing reservists. Under such a disadvantage the Greek army was in no position to capture the stronghold, and was therefore limited, initially, to a defensive role. The outcome of the siege remained for long in the balance and the terrible hardships of the winter affected the morale of both camps.

The operations took a new turn when the Greek High Command moved the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> division from Macedonia. On January 3 Constantine took over command of the Epirus army together with General Sapounzakis. The final general attack started in the morning of February 20. At 11 pm, after a strong show of resistance, Esat Pasha offered the unconditional surrender of Ioannina to the Greeks. In the morning of February 22 the units of the second detachment which carried out the main onslaught against Bizani, paraded through the flag-covered streets of Ioannina with Constantine at their head. The Greek army

captured 20,000 prisoners in Bizani and Ioannina. Another 15,000 Turkish soldiers retreated to Albania pursued by Greek forces. On March 3 Greek units seized Argyrokastro and Delvino. Next day a cavalry regiment entered Tepeleni. Venizelos, in a telegram he sent Constantine, defined the northern line beyond which the army should not move, thus forbidding the seizure of Avlona – a port of great interest to Italy.

When the First Balkan War broke out, the powers of the Triple Entente temporarily lost control over the Balkan belligerents. They planned to resume their regulatory role with the London Conference. In December 1912 an armistice was signed in London without the participation of Greece which continued the siege of Ioannina. The armistice, however, was violated by a coup that the Young Turks staged in Constantinople. The resumption of hostilities gave the Balkan countries, especially Bulgaria, the opportunity to seize new territories (Scoutari, Adrianople). A new armistice allowed the belligerents to settle outstanding issues. Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria fixed through bilateral agreements the limits of the lands they had occupied, while the Ottoman Empire – according to the Treaty of London of May 1913 – surrendered all territories west of the Aimos mountain range as well as Crete.

The Second Balkan War was a settling of scores between the victors of the First Balkan War. Since there was no clear demarcation between the territorial targets of the four allies and since Bulgaria's horizontal aspirations cut across the vertical lines of attack by the Greeks and the Serbs, from Thrace to western Macedonia, a settling of scores was only a matter of time. The occupation of Thessaloniki by the Greeks certainly constituted a major grievance for Bulgaria. Furthermore the Austro-Hungarian Empire did everything in its power to sow discord among the allies on various fronts. It promoted the independence of Albania, the internationalization of Thessaloniki, and encouraged Romania's claims on Bulgarian Dobrudja. Although the Serbs assisted the Bulgarian siege and the taking of Edirne, they also attempted to revise the Serb-Bulgarian treaty of 1912 to consolidate their territorial gains in western and northern Macedonia.

Pressured by an intransigent King Ferdinand and a fanatical IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization), Bulgarian leaders plunged into a war on five fronts. Besides Greece and Serbia, they had to fight against Romania who took Dobrudja and the Ottomans who recaptured Edirne. Bulgaria was compelled to sue for peace and



managed to keep most of Thrace. The atrocities committed by all sides simply confirmed the stereotype in the western media of Balkan barbarism.<sup>3</sup> The treaty of Bucharest on August 10, 1913, became another yet ill-fated date in Bulgarian history. The First World War appeared to Bulgaria as an opportunity to reverse the misfortune of 1913, on top of that of 1878 in Berlin.

The Balkan wars marked the beginning of the exodus of the Greek population in Asia Minor. The Ottoman defeats in Macedonia and Thrace, as well as the loss of Lesbos, Chios, and Samos, infuriated the Young Turks. After the Treaty of Bucharest was signed, a systematic persecution of Greeks was launched in the area of Adrianople that soon spread out to western Asia Minor.<sup>4</sup> The uprooting of thousands from their places of residence and their villages was not only an act of reprisal by the Ottoman government in retaliation for the thousands of Turkish refugees who had reached Asia Minor from Macedonia and Thrace; it also served the practical purpose of rehabilitating these refugees in the homes of the Greeks who were expelled.<sup>5</sup> When the First World War broke out, such persecutions were also serving strategic purposes – as conceived by the German military advisers to the Turks. They were also used to put pressure on Greece during the negotiations over the final status of the Aegean Islands that Greece had seized during the Balkan wars without, however, having secured Ottoman recognition of their annexation. Venizelos protested against the treatment of the Greeks of Asia Minor but he agreed to negotiate with Constantinople the exchange of Greeks of Eastern Thrace and of the Aidini *vilaet* with Muslims of Macedonia and Epirus. Such negotiations were abandoned after the Turks came out on the side of the central powers when the First World War broke out.<sup>6</sup>

Between the end of the Balkan wars and the beginning of the First World War, some 130,000 Greeks settled in Macedonia, 20,000 in the Aegean Islands, and 30,000 on the Greek mainland.<sup>7</sup> During the same period Turkey received approximately 122,665 Muslim refugees. On top of the compulsory movements of populations and the creation of battalions of forced labor that were included in the duties of the military service imposed on the Greeks, there were also destructions of whole cities with numerous victims. As documented by French testimonies, ancient Phokaia, a small seaside town of 9,000 inhabitants, was laid to waste by the Turks on June 12, 1914.<sup>8</sup>

The Ottoman authorities, arguing that the population transfers were but a measure of military protection of the border areas from elements

hostile to their empire, systematically implemented such a plan under the guidance of German general, Liman von Sanders. The precarious position of the Greek populations in western Asia Minor had become an issue that preoccupied the Greek government. The choices faced by Greece were either to cooperate with the opponents of the Ottoman administrations thus risking a temporary, at least, deterioration of the Greeks' living conditions in Asia Minor, or opt for neutrality and avoid any provocations of the Porte in the hope that the Asia Minor Greeks would thus be spared.

One of the main reasons that prompted Venizelos to insist on the need for Greece to take part in the war by joining the Triple Entente, was the fear that the Ottoman Empire might secure, in exchange for its neutrality in the conflict (which it observed, formally at least, until November 1914), the return of the eastern Aegean Islands. However, as of the summer of 1914, the Porte became essentially bound to the war machine of the central powers. In the autumn, the Turkish fleet was under the command of a German admiral while German men of war bombed – with Turkish approval – the Russian ports on the Black Sea. Come November, the Ottoman Empire officially declared war against the Triple Entente. On January 24, 1915, the British ambassador in Athens asked Greece on behalf of the governments of Great Britain, France, and Russia to take part in the war on the side of the Entente in exchange for a large stretch of land on the western coasts of Asia Minor and Cyprus.

As of June 1917, the Greek army in its totality took part in the operations at the Macedonian front against the central powers (Germany, Austria, Bulgaria), thus contributing to the final victory of the Entente (Great Britain, France, Greece). The Moudros armistice on October 30, 1918, marked the end of the hostilities on Ottoman territories as well as the beginning of their fragmentation. In a memorandum submitted on October 30, 1918, Venizelos requested of the victors: Northern Epirus; the ratification of Greece's occupation of the Aegean Islands; Smyrna and its hinterland; and Thrace in its entirety. With the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine on November 27, 1919, Greece was given Western Thrace. This proved to be the only lasting Greek territorial gain from the First World War.

On the basis of the Patriarchate's statistics, the Aidin *villayet* with Smyrna as its capital had 950,000 Turks and 620,000 Greeks.<sup>9</sup> On May 15, 1919, Greek troops landed in Smyrna on the instruction of the

Allies. Early in 1919 Venizelos participated, as one of the victors, at the Conference of Paris and demanded protection for the Greek populations living in Asia Minor. The Treaty of Sèvres (July 27–August 10, 1920) aimed mainly at guaranteeing security for all the ethnic groups of the Ottoman Empire. Armenia became an independent state; Kurdistan gained its autonomy while Greece was mandated to protect Smyrna and its region that contained a large and thriving population.

The treaty recognized the annexation by Greece of Thrace – up to Tsatalza – and of the Aegean Islands with the exception of the Dodecanese. The status of Smyrna was also recognized comprising a major part of the *Aydin vilayet*: Greece was further mandated (in the Treaty of San Remo) to exercise sovereign rights there for a period of five years until such time as the fate of the area was finally decided by referendum. Finally, Constantinople remained the capital of the Ottomans as well as the seat of a captive sultan and an impotent government under the supervision of the Allied forces billeted in the city.

Greece's involvement in the task of implementing the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres in Asia Minor proved to be a mistake for which the Greeks paid a high price. The 2,450,000 Greeks who lived in Eastern Thrace, Istanbul, and Asia Minor as compared to 8,000,000 Turks and approximately 1,200,000 Armenians, Jews, Bulgars, etc. living there (the official Ottoman census of 1912 does not differ all that much from the Patriarchate's statistics as far as the numbers of non-Turks are concerned)<sup>10</sup> had been through the ordeal of a violent Turkification policy. Started in 1910, this policy was systematically pursued until the First World War when it peaked. Its victims were not only Greeks but also Arabs, Jews, and especially Armenians (1915). The massacre of the Armenians on orders from the leadership of the Young Turks was a political decision with long-term consequences for the Turkish state that succeeded them.

### **Domestic Politics (1914–20)**

Venizelos was less devoted than Charilaos Tricoupis to the principle of the superiority of parliamentary politics over all other forms of democratic governance. His own inclination was toward the Aristotelian division of politics into pure and corrupt versions. He was therefore less concerned with the political system than with its actual operation.

This view of politics naturally placed the extraordinary burden of state management on the persons in power, rather than on the system of politics. Success therefore would depend mostly on the attributes of the individuals who were placed, by choice or chance, in the key posts of power.<sup>11</sup> Venizelos salvaged the monarchy from extinction after the 1909 coup had challenged its legitimacy and restored King George as an arbiter of parliamentary politics in 1910. He was depending entirely on the moderation and prudence of that particular monarch and could neither anticipate the assassination of George on March 18, 1913, nor the character of Constantine who replaced him on the throne. Before the national schism, Venizelos had encouraged a bipolar system of governance in which the head of state and the head of government shared substantial authority. His hope was that the monarch, grateful for the offering, would be willing to grant his consent on vital issues of reform and foreign policy.

When the clash between the Crown and the prime minister (the head of state and the head of the government) began to occur in 1915 over Venizelos's decision to enter the war on the side of the Triple Entente, Constantine was prepared to exercise his royal prerogative and defy the authority of the majority in Parliament. His predilection for the monarch's divine rights, a popularity gained during the Balkan campaigns, and his prime minister's own practice of considering the king a partner in politics drove Constantine to partake in decision-making that would determine the future of the state.

Venizelos's view of the state was a synthesis of Trikoupis's intention to make it the locomotive of growth by creating a mighty infrastructure, and Deliyannis's vision of agricultural self-sufficiency and considerations of welfare politics. Although the Cretan politician inherited Deliyannis's orphaned constituency, mainly because Trikoupis's party had been preserved by Georgios Theotokis, his reformist platform won him the overwhelming support of those in the middle class who had not declared their political preference before.

The "national schism" (*dichasmos*), with all the features of a clash between conservatives and liberals, appeared strange in a country without an "ancien régime" and a landed aristocracy that would turn to the royalty for inspiration. King Constantine owed his popularity to his performance as a commander-in-chief in military campaigns that were spurred by Venizelos's irredentist agenda. Ironically, Constantine, who made his mark in the military field, became the rallying force of

the war-weary population of old Greece (as opposed to the newly-acquired territories) and the traditional political parties that had joined forces against a reformist Venizelos in the elections of 1910 and 1912.

By a strange twist of fate, the 1915 pro-royalist coalition against Venizelos included more or less the same parties that had been overruled by King George in 1910 in favor of the Cretan newcomer. The king had then made use of his prerogative to appoint the prime minister and by choosing Venizelos had altered the course of Greek politics. Five years later King Constantine reversed his father's choice. He revived the old political parties – already past their prime in 1910 – with an anti-Venizelos platform and became their actual leader.

A micro-historical, bottom-up approach of the split, will reveal differences and divisions that lay dormant in Greek society and politics before the Great War. Regional, social, ethnic, even family conflicts, activated by an extraordinary external event such as the First World War, might have, under normal circumstances, remained inert.<sup>12</sup> A study of a notorious paramilitary organization of royalists, "The Epistratoi", constitutes a partial remedy for the absence of bottom-up works on the period of the Great Schism.<sup>13</sup>

On the eve of the "National Schism," Greece had increased its territory from 25,014 to 41,993 square miles and its population from 2,700,000 to 4,800,000.<sup>14</sup> The incursion of a large population from the newly acquired territories posed a threat to the Peloponnesian monopoly on public office. The political establishment of "old Greece" refused to share its privileges with the newcomers and began to question the tenet of irredentism that was diminishing their significance in the state apparatus. The royalist slogan, "A small but honourable Greece," was a synonym for maintaining the territorial status quo and therefore the privileges of the first citizens of the independent state.

The "autochthons" of 1844 had fought tooth and nail against extending citizen rights to Greeks who had flown into the new state from the unredeemed territories of the Ottoman Empire. Their progeny of 1916–17 were no different in opposing Venizelos's irredentism and the sharing of power.

The issue which triggered such vehement division between the Greeks was initially centered on a choice of foreign policy. Not without justification, great significance was attached to the decision of either siding with the Triple Entente as Venizelos insisted or observing neutrality, advocated by the Germanophile Constantine, since the future of

the state would certainly depend on the outcome of the great conflict. The subsequent clash of personalities between Venizelos and Constantine made the controversy an acrimonious contest of personal loyalties for most of the population.

When Venizelos resigned in March 1915 as a result of the king's rejection of his plan to attack the Dardanelles by land and to assist the allied naval operation, he did not question Constantine's constitutional right to oppose his foreign policy.<sup>15</sup> The general election of June 13, 1915, conducted by the minority government of Dimitrios Gounaris, gave the liberals 184 seats in a Parliament of 310. This victory was interpreted by Venizelos as a popular mandate to pursue his own brand of foreign policy, but Constantine's illness kept him out of office until August 23.

On September 23 Bulgaria mobilized its forces and Venizelos succeeded in persuading the king to sign a decree for Greece's mobilization. Doros Alastos dramatized the discussion between the two men in the following terms: "Your Majesty, having failed to persuade you, I am very sorry but it is my duty, as representing at this moment the sovereignty of the people, to tell you that this time you have no right to differ from me. ... If you are determined to violate the Constitution you must say so clearly and assume full responsibility." The king's answer was staggering: "As long as it is a question of internal affairs, I am bound to obey to the popular verdict; but when it is a question of foreign policy, great international questions ... I must insist that it shall or shall not be done because I feel responsible before God."<sup>16</sup> Venizelos's threat of resignation nevertheless worked and Constantine relented because he did not want to appear negligent of his country's security. His main argument of opposition to Greek mobilization was that Serbia, under pressure from Austria, was incapable of placing 150,000 men into the field of Greece's Macedonian borders, as stipulated by the Greco-Serbian Alliance. Venizelos's suggestion that the allies provided this force instead, and its approval by France and Britain, tipped the balance, but only briefly.

The presence of foreign troops in Thessaloniki caused much resentment, fomented especially by the royalist press. A war to support Serbia against the Triple Alliance made less sense to the average Greek who was prepared to fight, as he had done in the past, for the irredentist causes of his own country. Yet Venizelos's fiery speech in Parliament that he would honor the Greco-Serbian Treaty and protect the Serbian flank, gave his government a vote of confidence by a majority of 49.

Constantine refused to abandon Greece's neutrality and Venizelos was once more forced to hand in his resignation. A Zaimis caretaker government was followed by one under Skouloudis, who described his policy toward the Triple Entente as one of "very benevolent neutrality".<sup>17</sup> Skouloudis's policy nevertheless proved damaging to both Greek and allied interests. In April 1915 he refused to allow the Serb troops based in Corfu the use of the Greek railways for them to return to the Macedonian front. Later, when the Germans informed the Greek government that they would have to occupy Fort Rupel as a defensive measure against Entente advances in Macedonia, Skouloudis did not refuse them outright. As a result on May 23 a Bulgarian detachment, under a German officer, took over the fort which was given up by its defenders without resistance.<sup>18</sup>

The commander-in-chief of the Entente forces in Thessaloniki proclaimed martial law and by doing so removed the city from the authority of the Greek government. The high-handed methods of the allies began to take their toll in Greek public opinion. Greek ships were detained in Mediterranean ports under allied control and allied embassies in Athens refused visas to individuals with royalist credentials. In June 1915 the Greek occupation of Northern Epirus, granted to Venizelos by the Entente in 1914, was revoked, as Italy refused to entrust the security of her forces there to the Greek government. On June 21 the Entente demanded the demobilization of the Greek army, the dissolution of the Greek Parliament, and the holding of new elections.<sup>19</sup>

Venizelos's abstention from the December 1915 elections marked the beginning of a protracted struggle between Venizelist and anti-Venizelist forces. Initially the conflict was between the representatives of two institutions, the king and the popularly elected prime minister. Most Greeks became involved in a debate over the powers vested by the constitution in these two branches of government. Some of the leading officers of the 1909 coup were supportive of the liberal argument that the king had no right to ignore the will of the electorate, but others had lost their former zeal for reform and did not wish to jeopardize their comfortable careers by opposing the king. Most members of the Military League of 1909 had been elevated to high ranks in a very short time – thanks to the Balkan wars waged by Venizelos – and had acquired the conservative outlook that high office often brings.

The 1916 revolt in Thessaloniki had a lasting effect on Greek politics. George Ventiris, the most articulate of Venizelist apologists, dismissed

his mentor's involvement in the plot.<sup>20</sup> The line of argument of Venizelos's supporters – namely that the revolt was a spontaneous act of the local population along with the military stationed in the province – was also promoted by then Captain Neokosmos Grigoriadis, an early participant: “Those who organised the revolt had no time to ask for advice. ... Venizelos had not been consulted”.<sup>21</sup>

Periclis Argyropoulos, former Venizelist Prefect of Thessaloniki, had been in contact with French officials in the city as well as with Venizelos. Early in December of 1915 he was informed by his friend, Alexandros Zannas, that the French command had given up hope that Constantine would enter the war on the side of the Entente and had decided to allow the Serbian king to establish his headquarters in Thessaloniki. This decision, according to Alexandros Zannas, would depose the Greek authorities from the province and offer Macedonia to the Serbs. Between December 4 and December 7, Argyropoulos, Zannas, and members of the local Liberal club, organised the “National Defence” of Thessaloniki.<sup>22</sup>

Not long after the “National Defence” was founded, Venizelos divulged his worries about the morale of the officer corps to General Leonidas Paraskevopoulos, influential commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Corps. His fear was that the fighting spirit of the military had been undermined by the king and the military was therefore not in a position to back Greece's future participation on the side of the Entente.<sup>23</sup>

This early indication of Venizelos's interest in a Thessaloniki-based provisional government may not have found favor with the British and was not pressed further. Venizelos however granted his approval to the recruitment of volunteers by the French army in Macedonia.<sup>24</sup>

The capitulation of the Greek Fort Rupel in Eastern Macedonia to the Bulgarians must have made up his mind to rise against the government in Athens. However, regular officers joining the “National Defence” between August 1916 and March 1917 amounted to only 280–300 out of an officer corps of 4,500. Constantine's decision to demobilize troops as a further guarantee of his government's neutrality caused Venizelos great apprehension as he saw the futility in a coup without support by the much reduced army. The outbreak of the Thessaloniki revolt in August 1916 therefore took him by surprise and Zannas, one of the instigators, risked a trip to Athens to pacify his leader's anger.<sup>25</sup>

When the revolt began, demobilized troops had not been moved yet from Thessaloniki. The commander of the demobilized 11<sup>th</sup> division, General Tricoupis, chose to remain loyal to the king and turned his



troops against the insurgents. Ignoring British objections, commander-in-chief General Sarrail, intervened forcing the 11<sup>th</sup> division out of the city and helped the members of the "Defence" install their provisional government.<sup>26</sup> In September 1916, Venizelos, Admiral Paul Koundouriotis, and the former chief of general staff, Panayotis Danglis, landed in Thessaloniki to lead the Greek contribution to the allied war effort. The triumvirate formed a provisional government in direct conflict with the Athens political establishment.

According to a British diplomat, "Not only has Mr. Venizelos' action put fresh spirit into its promoters here (Thessaloniki), but it has encouraged recruits to come forward from Macedonia where, as I have already reported, very little enthusiasm had hitherto been manifested. ... The Committee of National Defence must now have at its disposal nearly twenty thousand men."<sup>27</sup>

Franco-British violations of Greece's territorial integrity throughout 1916 contributed to the sense of offended honor of the Greeks and therefore increased Constantine's popularity. His policy found support in that segment of the population whose xenophobia was inflamed by the high-handed tactic of the allies.

In November 1916, a neutral zone was drawn between Venizelos's Greece and that of Constantine. On November 19 Admiral Dartige du Fournet notified all diplomats of hostile states to leave Athens. Several days before, he had asked Constantine's government to surrender 18 field batteries, 6 mountain batteries, and 4,000 Manlicher rifles, as well as ammunition and 50 lorries. Following Prime Minister Spyridon Lambros's refusal to obey, the French admiral renewed his demand on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Two days later he landed some detachments in Piraeus and was faced with the hostility of the royalists. In the morning of December 1, du Fournet's 2,500 French and British marines were attacked by royalist irregulars while marching to the city of Athens. The admiral and some of his men were taken prisoners although Constantine had assured him that the allies had nothing to fear. Once the foreign troops withdrew to their ships the Athenian Venizelists were left at the mercy of the "reservists," a notorious royalist paramilitary band. The entire operation was led by two generals of the army; troops of the military district of Athens took orders from General K. Kallaris and the soldiers of the active defense were commanded by General A. Papoulias (later commander-in-chief of the Asia Minor expedition).<sup>28</sup>

Venizelos had asked the Entente to remove the barrier of the neutral zone to allow him to march on Athens in order to reunite the country, but to no avail. At the beginning of June, the question of the Thessalian harvest brought matters to a head. If Constantine was denied the harvest his government could no longer withstand the allied blockade. Forced by an allied ultimatum, the king finally abdicated in favor of his second son Alexander, the heir-apparent, as George, his first-born son, was politically tainted. Constantine and the rest of his family left Greece on a British destroyer.<sup>29</sup> At about the same time French troops occupied Thessaly.<sup>30</sup> Venizelos returned to Athens to assume the reins of government and formed a cabinet consisting of N. Politis as minister of foreign affairs, E. Repoulis, minister of the interior, A. Michalakopoulos, minister of finance, A. Papanastasiou, minister of communications, P. Coundouriotis, minister of marine, and Sp. Simos, minister of relief. The chamber elected in June 1915 was restored to its functions and soon soldiers of the formerly divided army joined forces in the Macedonian front, thus terminating Greek neutrality *de jure*. The Greek army was provisioned and supplied by the allies with modern weapons. Ten divisions were put to the field to confront the Germans and the Bulgarians on the Macedonian front.

The return of Venizelos was followed by the decree of martial law and a thorough purge of royalists from the civil service and the army. The purge was conducted systematically in all sectors of civil society leading to the exile of many royalist politicians.<sup>31</sup> A decree signed by King Alexander suspended the constitutional guarantees for the protection of public agencies, abolished administrative councils, and vested ministries with absolute authority over dismissals and suspensions. Each ministry formed its own committee that evaluated the behavior of its employees throughout the years of the political crisis. Of those imprisoned and dismissed for misconduct by far the largest category were the gendarmes. The problems of security caused by the depletion of the gendarmerie of its more able members caused the hasty reinstatement of the least fanatical amongst the royalists.<sup>32</sup>

The task of merging two parallel military hierarchies divided by political passions was never properly accomplished. Officers of the "National Defence" were viewed by their colleagues who had remained under the authority of Athens as a band of adventurers in search of promotion and foreign patrons. Liberal politicians saw in the officers of the "Defence" a permanent clientele and natural allies against their royalist opponents.

The Thessaloniki government had introduced, in October 1916, an act granting promotions to officers who had excelled in the field of action. Given the fact that officers who remained in Athens (known by the derogatory designation “paraminantes”) could not profit from this act, this became yet another contentious issue within the army. In spite of a provision specifying that a minimum of ten years of service was necessary for an officer to reach the rank of major, “Defence” officers had attained that rank in four or five years. When Commander of the Army General P. Danglis admonished Venizelos about irregularities performed by the Ministry of Army Affairs under Andreas Michalakopoulos, the prime minister answered that there was no way of reversing accomplished facts.<sup>33</sup>

In February 1918 a mutiny instigated by non-commissioned officers protesting against the war occurred in Lamia and spread to Thebes, Levadia, and Atalanti. The government suppressed the revolt with the aid of a Cretan regiment and set-up courts-martial which tried and executed several officers, NCOs, and even soldiers.<sup>34</sup>

In the autumn of 1918 the Greek forces in Macedonia broke the German and Bulgarian resistance. Soon, Greek troops and ships joined the allies in their triumphant entry into Constantinople. On July 14, 1919, the Greek Evzones marched past the Arc de Triomphe in Paris in the allied celebration of victory. Venizelos’s presence in the Paris Peace Conference constituted the crowning glory of his arduous effort to overcome royal resistance against his country’s entry into the Great War on the side of the Triple Entente.

Although wars changed Greece’s territory radically, the transformation of the economy was much slower and followed an incremental process. Despite the migration, between 1906 and 1914, of 250,000 farm workers to the United States, 65 percent of the Greek population was still occupied in agriculture on the eve of the First World War. Yet, one third of the grain and other basic foodstuffs were imported because of the sector’s low productivity. In the Peloponnese small producers smarted from the chronic currant crisis, while the large landholdings of Thessaly, representing 33–35 percent of all cultivated land in 1914, contributed little to the national economy. The absentee landlords/entrepreneurs who had purchased most of the land from Ottoman owners refused to invest capital in order to improve productivity. Instead they rented out their property for grazing or tenant farming. Furthermore, the well-connected *chifflike* (privately owned land) owners were in a position to

convince their political protégés to maintain high tariffs on imported grain in order to protect their own low-grade production from foreign competition. The result was that the accession of Thessaly to Greece caused the price of grain to rise rather than to fall, as had been expected.

The rise in the price of bread generated a political alliance between landless peasants and the urban middle class, both demanding the parceling out of the large landholdings. Although the liberals had championed redistribution of land since their advent in 1910–11, it was the arrival of the first Anatolian refugees in 1914–17 that compelled them to take action. The drafting of laws for the expropriation of the large estates was begun in 1917 by the revolutionary government in Thessaloniki, but was actually put into effect after the 1922 influx of refugees from Turkey. The expropriation of estates for distribution to landless peasants rose from one in 1918, to 63 in 1920, to 1,203 between 1923 and 1925.<sup>35</sup>

The Entente embargo on enemy goods and trade caused conditions of imposed protectionism on Greek agricultural and industrial products. Furthermore, Anglo-French demand for food supplies generated by the war in Macedonia encouraged Greek producers to rise to the challenge and reap the ensuing economic benefits. When the first census of manufacturers was taken in 1917, there were 282 large factories and 2,000 small ones, employing over 35,000 workers. Wine, olive oil, and flour were the chief items of Greek industry, but there was also manufacturing of soap, cement, and chemical fertilizers.<sup>36</sup>

The Allied armies had left behind them a number of roads in Macedonia and the Red Cross was spending large sums in aid for reconstruction. An American trade commissioner in Greece noted: "The eyes of all the nations were upon little Greece, as Venizelos who had endeared himself to the Allies, ably and proudly pleaded her cause at the Paris Peace Conference."<sup>37</sup>

The young King Alexander was not fond of the politician responsible for his family's misfortune but his main argument with Venizelos was his intention to marry a lovely commoner, Aspasia Manou. Although the royal institution was not popular with the adherents of the Liberal Party, few were willing to take the plunge of instituting a republic. Furthermore, the British, who exerted great influence on Venizelos's decisions, supported the royal institution because they believed a republican regime would bring Greece closer to France.<sup>38</sup> Venizelos put

the following options to his cabinet: a “semi-morganatic” marriage,<sup>39</sup> or the risk of loosing the king and having a regency until the National Assembly decided the future of the regime. Alexander and Aspasia married secretly in November 1919, overtaking the decision of the politicians. Less than a year later, Alexander was bitten by his pet monkey and died of blood poisoning. Given that his younger brother Paul refused to succeed him, Venizelos found himself in the predicament of having to choose between a republic and a new royal house. He decided to defer the decision until after the national elections. Upon returning from France on September 7, 1920, with the Treaty of Sèvres as the major achievement of his diplomacy, Venizelos informed Parliament that elections would be held on November 7 of that year.

Venizelos’s triumphant departure from France was marred by an assassination attempt against him carried out by two royalist officers at the Gare de Lyon. The idol of half of Greece was not seriously injured but his more fanatical followers embarked on a frenzy of terror against the royalists. The most prominent victim of their rampage was Ion Dragoumis, a diplomat and writer of tracts on nationalism, who was executed in broad daylight by paramilitary thugs.

Dragoumis, a member of an old family of scholars and politicians, was perhaps the most idiosyncratic of the anti-Venizelists. At the outbreak of the Great War he considered Greece’s place was with the Entente, but nurtured a personal dislike for the Cretan statesman whose sweeping irredentist agenda had destroyed his own project of reviving the Greek communities within the Ottoman realm. Dragoumis was something of a romantic. He lacked the ruthlessness of his contemporary politicians and he was slightly out of kilter with political developments. He was nevertheless the darling of Athenian society and some famous ladies of his time admired him for his patriotic fervor and his charm. Dragoumis’s death made a harsh impression on the populace on the eve of the elections and generated sympathy for the victims of state repression.<sup>40</sup>

Venizelos’s strategy was to include in the electoral districts new territories annexed or occupied by Greece. The Greek population of Thrace and Smyrna regarded Venizelos their savior and the fact that they were militarily occupied made the task of the opposition arduous. To secure an even larger turnout of votes for his party, Venizelos introduced the military vote for the first time. His decision caused much controversy given the politicization of the army’s leadership. In 1919 a

group of officers had organized a "Military League" to intimidate any opposition against Venizelos. The notorious chief of general staff, Theodore Pangalos, even planned a military government in case of a royalist electoral victory. As it turned out Venizelos acknowledged defeat before the announcement of the military electoral returns.<sup>41</sup>

The Liberal Party of the 1920 elections was not an internally united institution. The left-wing, under Alexander Papanastasiou, did not fall in line with the middle-of-the-road centrist tendencies of the party's charismatic leader. Whereas Papanastasiou and his republicans targeted the small working class and the fragmented peasantry, Venizelos appealed to the multitude of small businessmen, salaried workers, and small property-holders.

The platform of Venizelos's campaign was based on a wide appeal to different social classes and an attempt to transcend the national schism and the pending dynastic issue. The Treaty of Sèvres was the prize with which he sought to convince the population that its sacrifices throughout the protracted mobilization of conscripts had not been in vain. However, the Greek military presence in Asia Minor and its unresolved mission there did not figure in the campaign of the liberals.

The "United Opposition," consisting of a 16-man committee that included D. Gounaris, D. Rallis, N. Stratos, N. Kalogeropoulos, P. Tsaldaris, and other prominent anti-Venizelists, played down foreign policy issues and stressed two basic questions: the abuse of power by the Venizelists and the need for the restoration of Constantine to the throne. At the same time they tried to convince the great powers that they would not harm their interests and sought to build bridges with them. Of all anti-Venizelists, Gounaris was the only one who offered something of a party-program, which included the introduction of proportional representation and a vote for women.

The electoral outcome of November 14, 1920, was a blow to Venizelos and his supporters. His party won only 118 out of 369 seats in Parliament. Venizelism managed to keep its votes in Crete and a few enclaves in Epirus, the islands of Chios, Lesbos, and Thrace.

Venizelos interpreted his defeat as resulting from war-weariness and the hardships of mobilization. Anti-Venizelists believed that the promise of demobilization and withdrawal from Asia Minor was the most potent electoral weapon of the "United Opposition" and although the royalist government failed to deliver its promise once in power, most Greeks who cast their vote against Venizelos probably believed they

would stick to them.<sup>42</sup> The abuse of power by the Venizelists and the persecution of their adversaries was a further cause that mobilized votes for the opposition.

In his letter dated April 20, 1931, to the journalist historian, George Ventiris, Venizelos confided what he had done wrong after Alexander's death: his gravest error, he said, had been not to have postponed elections and discussed with the deposed king the possibility of installing his older son, George, on the throne. Such a solution, he believed, would have precluded future disasters and would have unified the Greeks.<sup>43</sup>

Venizelos's *ex post facto* confession may not have been an option in 1920. The allies had already overruled Prince George as a replacement of his father, because he had taken an active part in the November–December 1916 attack against the French expeditionary force in Athens.

## THE ASIA MINOR DEBACLE (1922–3)

The landing of Greek forces in Smyrna and the Treaty of Sèvres issued the death certificate of the Ottoman Empire and the birth certificate of modern Turkey. The Turks, impoverished and exhausted by successive wars, could not count on any assistance from their defeated allies, nor, of course, from their victorious opponents. When the West-dependant government in Istanbul sent the retired General Mustafa Kemal to inspect the Third Army corps in Sivas (Sevastia) and the Fifteenth Army corps in Erzerum, little did it suspect that it was opening its own grave and at the same time launching the history of modern Turkey.

Kemal started immediately rallying the Turkish armed forces and undermining the official government. In June 1918 he ordered the convocation of a conference with representatives from many parts of the Ottoman realm thus provoking his recall by the government which ended by putting a price on his head as an outlaw. The conference in Erzerum of July 23, 1919, lasted 14 days and debated Kemal's nationalistic programme. The participants demanded that the government resist foreign occupation and create a national assembly. In September of the same year the Conference in Sivas confirmed, by an even larger participation, the demands of the nationalists.

The secret contacts between Istanbul and the Ankara nationalists caused, in March 1920, the intervention and occupation of the capital by allied troops under General Milne. This led to the complete control of state services by the allies. On April 23, 1920, the Grand National Assembly declared unanimously in the National Contract that Kemal had been elected president thus bringing down the official government in Istanbul.

The Peace of San Remo in April 1920 guaranteed the interests of Great Britain in Mesopotamia and Palestine and the security of the Dardanelle



Straits. Italy and France received similar guarantees for their presence in Antalya and Cilicia. Given Italy's opposition to the mandate granted to Greece with regard to the region of Aydin and France's gradual alienation from the project, the Greeks became wholly dependent on Great Britain. The defeat of Venizelos at the elections of 1920 and the return of Constantine to the throne further weakened Greece's position.

At the London meeting in February 1921, Lloyd George gave the Greek delegates the impression that Britain enthusiastically supported the clean-up operations in Asia Minor. Ankara, however, proved extremely competent in diplomatic maneuvers, managing to forge friendly relations with Italy and France in 1921 and thus reinforcing their estrangement from British policy. The cooling off in the relations between the Allies and Italy had begun immediately after the war, at the Peace Conference in Paris, while the Franco-British clashes over the German restitutions issue were heightened after 1920.

In spite of the problems that the return of Constantine had created in relations between Greece and her major allies, the successive royalist governments did not abandon the policy of exchanging favors with the powers and especially with Britain. This policy of sticking to the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres (shared both by Venizelos and his opponents) was in the interest of both the Allies and Greece. The former profited from the presence of the Greek army to protect the Dardanelles from the Turkish nationalists while Greece asked, in exchange for the services she offered, for diplomatic and economic support to consolidate her position in Smyrna and Thrace. In this way, the Greek army became the instrument of a policy that secured the consensus of both Greek political camps. This policy however, by making the fate of the Greeks in Thrace and Asia Minor depend on the good will of the great powers reduced – after 1920 – the Greek governments to the role of a client who hopes to retain his patron's favor by impressing him with spectacular military actions.

Greece's optimism about the capabilities of its army to defeat the Kemalist insurgents on their own territory was given vent at the London meeting. It was at that meeting that an initiative by the British Foreign Secretary Curzon in favor of a possible compromise with the Turkish insurgency was quashed in February 1921. It was there and then that Greek politicians and military men (with, amongst them, the Venizelist Colonel Ptolemaios Sariyannis, chief of staff of Commander Anastasios Papoulias) competed with each other in exaggerated claims to convince

an all too willing Lloyd George that the annihilation of the Turkish forces was a question of time and determination. Greek self-assurance and the insistence of the Kemalists on the unconditional evacuation from Asia Minor of all foreign troops determined the outcome of the meeting.

In March, the Greek front in Asia Minor was extended with the seizure of Afion Karahishar. The tough Turkish resistance, indicative of the extent to which Kemal's forces had improved, led the Greek political and military leadership to take a serious decision after a lot of soul-searching. The Greeks set out to crush the enemy by attacking his very base, Ankara, and by destroying his lines of communication with the shore. Papoulias never uttered a single objection to this project. He only expressed indirectly his deep doubts by making extravagant demands for men and logistic support. In April 1921, the Gounaris government, whose trust in the judgment of the commander-in chief of the Greek forces in Asia Minor was next to nil, offered to retired general Ioannis Metaxas a post to represent the government on the general staff of Papoulias. When Metaxas rejected the offer, N. Theotokis offered him, without further ado, the very post of Papoulias himself. Metaxas, however, who was opposed to the Greek intervention in Asia Minor, ruled out his involvement believing that the Greek forces could never finally prevail in this war.

The restructuring of the general staff which had waged the Balkan Wars with Constantine as commander-in-chief of the Greek army, chief of staff, Victor Dousmanis, and second-in-command, General Xenophon Stratigos, was an act aimed mainly at lifting the morale of the combatants. Constantine played a relatively decorative role in preparing the operation while his staff officers contributed little in improving the army's morale or cooperating with the Asia Minor staff. By mid-July 1921 the largest Greek army ever (in excess of 200,000) was mobilized to carry out an operation whose final failure marked the end of the Greek presence in Asia Minor. The retreat to the line of Afion Karahishar-Eski Sehir after a war effort that cost the Greeks 25–30,000 dead, drastically changed the course of the campaign.

The Turks agreed with the Italian minister Count Sforza that they would manage their resources in Asia Minor together with the Italians, in exchange for recognition of the Turkish claims in Smyrna and Thrace. Italy progressively withdrew its forces from Antalya and allowed the Turks to take control of the region. The French soon followed the Italian

example by terminating hostilities with the Turks, thus opening the way for the French minister Franklin Bouillon to sign with Kemal in Ankara, in October 1921, the agreement that bears his name. By the terms of the agreement France granted the Ankara government 10,000 square kilometers of occupation at the borders with Syria. In exchange, the Turks gave the French the rights to exploit in common the sources of wealth-creation on their territory. The British foreign secretary Lord Curzon protested vigorously against such French breaches of faith, which also happened to damage British interests in Iraq.

Soviet Russia, responding to the British attempt to control shipping through the Straits and in the Black Sea, as well as to create buffer-states around the Soviet Eurasian realm, seized Georgia and Azerbaijan while also undertaking to protect Armenia from any Turkish infiltration. The Turco-Soviet Friendship Treaty of March 16, 1921, offered the two old adversaries the opportunity to deal with the major threats to them. According to the terms of this treaty, Russia agreed to the abolition of the capitulations, recognized the government of Ankara, and granted Kars and Asdrahan to Turkey, while Vatum was placed under common Russo-Turkish administration. The two contracting countries signed a compromise that they would not recognize conditions imposed on either of them by force. The security of an emergent Turkey was thus linked with anti-imperialist Soviet policy and the support of Kemal's forces against the Greeks became part of the Soviet endeavor to exclude the British from the Straits and the Black Sea. Even though Kemal's relations with the Italians and especially with the French were a nuisance to the Russians, this did not stop the Turks from signing, in October 1921, the Treaty of Kars with Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan recognizing their common borders.

During the meeting of the High Council in Cannes in January 1922, Lord Curzon, offered to declare Smyrna autonomous under the protection of the League of Nations and to renegotiate the extent of the territory of Thrace that had been given to Greece. The political changes in France and in Italy delayed the discussion of this plan. In March, the three allies proposed an armistice to the combatants, acknowledging Turkish sovereignty over the Asiatic territories of Turkey as well as the demilitarization of the Straits and the surrounding area. The Greek government, exhausted from the war effort, accepted the armistice but the Turks, backed by the French and the Soviets, continued to dictate conditions. The Greeks responded with a desperate attempt to seize

Istanbul to use it as leverage for putting pressure on Kemal, a move that stumbled on the absolute opposition of the British. This failed operation weakened the Greek defense line and brought closer the fatal Turkish blow in August 1922.<sup>1</sup> The Turkish advance of August 1922 brought about the collapse of the front and caused the rapid retreat of Greek troops. Within a few weeks the fate of the Greeks in Asia Minor was sealed.<sup>2</sup>

On January 3, 1923, in Lausanne, Greece and Turkey signed the treaty that provided for the compulsory exchange of populations between the two countries. Venizelos had proposed such an exchange, albeit on a voluntary not an obligatory basis, as early as 1919 at the peace conference in Paris. Removing people against their will from their homelands where their ancestors had lived proved a great tragedy for the populations which were thus uprooted. The criterion for such an exchange was religion. Turkish-speaking Christian Orthodox people and Greek-speaking Muslims found themselves, against their will, in countries that were alien to their customs and language. The scheme meant that 585,000 Muslims would be exchanged with 1,300,000 Orthodox Christians. In the face of popular protest, the protagonists of the Lausanne Treaty tried to shake off any responsibility for agreeing to the obligatory exchange. Ismet Pasha maintained that the idea originated with the Greek delegation while Venizelos considered the Norwegian Commission of the League of Nations, Fridtjof Nansen, as its promoter. The latter attributed it in turn to the representatives of the Great Powers in Istanbul.<sup>3</sup>

Irrespective of his intention to appear flexible on the issue of the obligatory exchange, Venizelos admitted the following in a statement he made to a Committee of Refugees in 1929: "The Lausanne Treaty does not, in essence, consist in an agreement for the exchange of Greek and Muslim populations and their assets but rather one for expelling the Muslim population from Greece after the Greeks were kicked out of Turkey. This is what really happened."<sup>4</sup> Anyway, the proposal for the exchange was accepted by the British foreign secretary, Lord Curzon, in Lausanne on December 1, 1922.

The populations to be exchanged fell into two categories: those who had abandoned their homes from both countries between 1912 (the First Balkan War) and January 30, 1923, and those who had never suffered from any impact of the wars. In the first category belonged some 845,000 Greeks who had followed the Greek armed forces as these

retreated from Asia Minor in September 1922, as well as some 115,000 Turks who left Greece in 1914. The second category comprised 200,000 Greeks who had stayed in Turkey after the retreat of the Greek forces and some 389,000 Turks who were residing in Greece.<sup>5</sup>

Among the persons who were excepted from the exchange scheme were on the one hand those among the Greeks of Istanbul, Imvros, and Tenedos who were Turkish subjects, as well as those who had established themselves there before the Moudros armistice of October 30, 1918, and on the other hand the Muslims of Western Thrace who were Greek subjects. The Treaty of Lausanne (July 24, 1923) granted Turkey the islands of Imvros (with 6,762 Greeks and only a few Turks) and Tenedos,<sup>6</sup> ten years after these had been in Greek hands.

### **The Heirs of the Catastrophe\***

The role of the 1922 refugees was catalytic to all subsequent developments in Greece. They posed a social challenge that strained the tolerance of the natives, introduced new perceptions in the closed society of the urban and rural centers, changed the face of party politics beyond recognition, gave the economy a vital transfusion of skills and labor, and affected the views of the intelligentsia as no other single source of influence had ever done before.

The refugee phenomenon was not altogether new in the Greek state. From its very foundation, as is seen elsewhere, the inhabitants of Rumely (mainland Greece) and the Morea (southern Greece) began to acquaint themselves with the communities of their Cretan, Epirot and Macedonian brethren who sought their support in their irredentist struggles. These later joined the rebellion, first as volunteer warriors and then often as refugees after every failed uprising. The spectacle of makeshift camps was common. Although mostly of the Orthodox persuasion, not all of these refugees spoke the language of the New Testament. This was nothing new. Albanians, Vlachs, and Slavs had added spice and variety to the traditional Greek representatives who met in Epidaurus in 1821 to forge a constitution that would politically unify a fragmented communal pattern of existence.

\* Title of Renée Hirschon's D.Phil. dissertation, *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe. The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Naturally, the members of the political establishment of Old Greece refused to share its privileges with the newcomers and resisted the continuation of the irredentist process itself when their grip on the control of the state began to appear precarious. The national schism was another symptom of the growing pains of a small culturally homogeneous state. The royalist slogan “A small but honorable Greece” was a synonym for the *status quo* of an “autochthonous” Greece. The task of unifying the new territorial acquisitions under a single authority was not the priority of the old establishment, which feared the loss of its power and privileges. The same was true with the much-increased scale of the 1922 refugee phenomenon. The threat, real or imaginary, that the dispossessed newcomers from Asia Minor posed to shopkeepers and small property-owners all over Greece was coupled with the ominous contagion of the Bolshevik revolution that disturbed the sleep of bourgeois Europe. Greek political parties were certainly unprepared for the symptoms presented by interwar radicalism, and much more alarmed than the true extent of the threat to the social order really warranted. Industrial unrest, general strikes, agitation, and corporatism were perceived as signs of impending doom.<sup>7</sup> However, the schism had produced a Parliament dominated by the liberal camp, and precluded a coalition of bourgeois political forces to face the crisis. By 1925 most liberal politicians were unwilling to assume the cost of harsh economic measures that would benefit the anti-Venizelist opposition whether inside or outside Parliament. They were even prepared to abdicate their own responsibilities and allow a “caretaker” military figure like Theodore Pangalos to do the dirty work for them. It was under these circumstances that military corporatism reached its brief heyday and became an operative feature of mid-1920s Greece. In a traditional society where clientelism prevailed, the attempt by the military to introduce an element of professional corporatism in their interventions was ultimately condemned to failure. The ponderous coup of 1935, masterminded by the only military organization set up to achieve corporatist aims (*Elliniki Stratiotiki Organosis* – ESO), failed miserably, but posed yet another challenge to the parliamentary system as the only source of legitimacy.<sup>8</sup> Although patron–client relationships destroyed all attempts at horizontal organization of claimants, the social isolation of the refugees and their lack of connections, other than their dependence on specific politicians, encouraged the development of a corporatist identity, as well as a form of class identity within their ranks that profoundly affected Greek politics.

The influx of about 300,000 men of voting age, ranking almost solidly with the liberal camp, determined the pattern of elections, at least until 1932. Furthermore the anti-monarchical stance of the refugees in conjunction with the anti-Constantinist sentiments of the mainstream Venizelists was another novelty that had a special impact on the 1924 change of regime. The native liberals opposed King Constantine as a person rather than the institution he represented.

If Constantine had not challenged Venizelos's authority as the elected prime minister, he would have been remembered for his presence at the front line in the Balkan Wars. The refugees had no such recollections but harbored bitter memories of forcible expulsion from their homeland, which they associated with the anti-Venizelist government then in power and its leader King Constantine. Their loss of property and status had the effect of inspiring them with revolutionary ideals, with which the cautious radicalism of the natives could not be compared.

Local conferences of refugees that convened through 1923 to determine a common position in Greek politics concluded that they owed unqualified allegiance to Eleftherios Venizelos.<sup>9</sup> True to their commitment, the refugees backed the liberals in the elections of 1923, 1926, and 1928. Some observers believe that without this support the Venizelist camp could not have dominated the polls throughout this period.<sup>10</sup> Yet in spite of their decisive electoral impact, the refugees were under-represented as a group in Parliament. Although they formed 20 percent of the total population, their deputies amounted on average to only 12–13 percent in the House (the most they ever gained was 38 seats out of 300 in the elections of 1932).<sup>11</sup> This was due to their geographical dispersal, which gave them a "dominant voice in determining the victory or defeat of the old political parties of Greece, but prevented them from forming an independent political force."<sup>12</sup>

The Ankara Convention of 1930 between Greece and Turkey, which cancelled the claims of the refugees to their abandoned properties in Anatolia, constituted a watershed for refugee political behavior. The widespread disillusionment with parliamentary politics felt by the refugees as a result led to a significant swing to the left and the development of a class consciousness. It was a way of "sublimating their alienation by struggling for an envisioned international order in which ethnic minorities would not constitute political problems."<sup>13</sup> In the 1931 by-elections in Thessaloniki, where the refugees formed 48 percent of the population, the Liberal candidate received only 38 percent of the

vote (compared to 69 percent three years earlier) while the Communists doubled their share.<sup>14</sup>

However, the flight of refugee votes to the anti-Venizelist camp was caused by false promises of compensation for their lost property and was only temporary. Given its history, the Populist Party could never aspire to a reconciliation with the refugees. During the Venizelist coup of 1935 the refugees unanimously backed the Venizelist rebels against the Populist government.<sup>15</sup> The majority of refugee defectors from Venizelism went to the Communist camp, but this transition was not easy. In 1924 the Comintern decided that the Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian parts of Macedonia ought to form a united and autonomous state within a Balkan Confederation. For the Greek Communists (KKE) the implications of this decision, which amounted to a surrender of newly-acquired territory, were grave. Such party luminaries as Yannis Kordatos and Seraphim Maximos warned their comrades of the consequences that this would have for the refugees in particular and the masses in general, but they were ignored and resigned in despair. The decision to fall in line with the Comintern split the Greek Communists, but the damage could not be undone: the refugees who had settled in Macedonia refrained from joining the KKE's ranks. The fear of once again becoming an ethnic minority in a united Macedonia with a hostile Slavic majority determined the political choices of the rural settlers for years to come.

Refugees who did become members of the KKE soon realized that they would have to give up their allegiance to their special refugee cause and bow to their party's priorities, which often clashed with their own corporate interests. The party's opposition to Venizelist "imperialism" during the Asia Minor campaign, its subsequent support of the native workers against the newcomers, and its condemnation of the massive settlement of refugees in Macedonia and Thrace "as part of a sinister plan of the Greek bourgeoisie for a forcible alteration of the ethnic composition of these regions,"<sup>16</sup> highlighted the predicament of the Communist refugees.<sup>17</sup>

In 1934 the adoption of the "Popular Front" strategy against Fascism allowed the KKE to relax its ideological rigor and revise its position regarding the refugees. The policy for an "independent Macedonia and Thrace" was replaced by "full national and political equality for all national minorities," and an extra effort was made to win over republicans who were disappointed with the Venizelist camp. By 1935 about



half of the Central Committee and most of the Politburo members were refugees, including the party's Secretary-General Nikos Zachariadis.<sup>18</sup> The refugees as a distinct group began to lose their cohesion but offered their radical zeal to the Communist movement.

One of the most important new developments of the post-1922 era was the end of the territorial expansion of Greece. The country had at last acquired permanent borders. The transition from the twentieth century's second decade of glory and expansion to the third of defeat and retrenchment was not easy for the Greeks to accomplish. Some felt trapped within the claustrophobic confines of a problematic state, others sought to rationalize Greece's predicament and exchange the loss of the Great Idea with a new concentration on westernization and development. George Theotokas' book *Elefthero Pnevma* (Free Spirit),<sup>19</sup> published in 1929, was a timely attempt to rid his generation of the wreckage of past illusions and stem the tide of pessimism or mystical escapism represented by the poets Karyotakis and Sikelianos respectively.<sup>20</sup> The poet Karyotakis, who took his own life, became a symbol of the postwar lost generation, while Sikelianos attempted to revive the pagan glory of antiquity. Theotokas praised the symbiosis of the worthy and contradictory elements that comprise Greek tradition, the legacy of folk and scholarly achievement, of the self-taught warrior Ioannis Makriyannis and the sophisticated bard, Cavafy, alike. But his main preoccupation was to steer Greece back into the mainstream of European tradition of which it had always been part.<sup>21</sup> A general turned politician and dictator also tried to establish a cultural continuum that would bring Greece into what he perceived as the European mainstream. Ioannis Metaxas's "Third Greek Civilization" was akin to Mussolini's visions and was as opposed to pessimism, escapism, and Communism as was Theotokas. Yet his scheme was exclusive and in fact insular, while the vision of Theotokas was inclusive and cosmopolitan. Although some intellectuals sought to counter Greece's psychological self-isolation, parochialism was already setting in.

The "autochthonous" interpretation of the nation in 1844 was doomed by an expanding kingdom. As the nineteenth-century historian Constantinos Paparrigopoulos well understood, a cultural concept of unity could provide a bond that would facilitate the acculturation of Albanians, Vlachs, and Slavs inhabiting the Hellenic state. Thus Isocrates's dictum "We consider Greeks those who partake of our culture" became the basis of nineteenth-century Greek irredentism. The

cultural homogeneity of the Greeks owes much to the open and flexible notion of what constituted “Greekness” in the era of the Great Idea.

The content of Greek nationalism was transformed during the interwar period. Besides the Asia Minor catastrophe and the sealing of Greek borders, the Comintern’s stance – adopted by a dutiful KKE – proved a formidable challenge to Greece’s territorial integrity. Thus the danger “from within” became an entirely new threat to a state which hitherto had only known external enemies.

The new content of Greek nationalism was a denial of the Communist creed. It was also connected with the insecurity that prevailed after the First World War, which had to do primarily with the threat from the “north.” Class analysis and “historical materialism” that cut across national distinctions, in conjunction with claims to Greek territory from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Albania, indirectly determined the state’s ideological orientation. Whereas during the irredentist years state ideology reflected a generosity toward potential converts to Hellenism and tolerance for ethnic idiosyncrasies, the interwar state strove for Hellenic authenticity as something conferred by history. An exclusive and privileged relationship with antiquity became one of the two legitimizing elements of Greekness. The other was ideological purity. The post-1922 decline of liberal democracy and its demise over the decade following 1936 weighed heavily in the calamities that befell Greece later.

In the meantime the displacement and relocation of people, as with the Asia Minor refugees, undermined patron–client relationships and facilitated the advent of ideologies. The arrival of the refugee newcomers in the rural and urban centers destroyed the fabric of traditional political relations and helped to recreate the network of political camps and confrontations. This, however, was a long-drawn-out process.

The attitude of political parties toward the “other,” whether refugees or ethnic groups, depended entirely on their point of entry into Greek politics. It was not because of ideological inclination that the Venizelist Liberals favored their refugee clients, nor did the Conservative Populists draw Jewish and Muslim support because of their party platform. As long as the Venizelist/anti-Venizelist divide prevailed, the refugees gave their allegiance to their political patrons, whereas the old-established Jews and the Arvanites (descendants of the Albanians) voted unanimously for the anti-Venizelists.

Even under the Metaxas regime, state relations with the “others” on the basis of their party allegiances did not change. Metaxas was thus

more friendly toward the Jews, the Arvanites, and the Muslims than the liberal Venizelists had ever been, and certainly less friendly toward the refugees of the urban (as opposed to the rural) centers and the Slav Macedonians.

The Anatolian refugees established in rural Macedonia were mostly Turkish-speaking or speakers of Pontic Greek (equally unintelligible to the natives) and for that reason could not have exerted a Hellenizing influence in the region. Their identity conformed to the Christian Orthodox culture of their “Rum” communities, but their inevitable affinity with the Greek state as their most important source of support and security would eventually transform most of them into ardent patriots. Thus the newcomers unwittingly became the cause of a significant division among the natives of Macedonia. The antagonism of the Turkish-speaking refugees toward the Slavic- and Greek-speaking natives over the abandoned properties of the departed Turks had far-reaching consequences for the society of northern Greece. Many Slav-speakers opted for the Communist Party and some joined the Democratic Army of the 1946–9 civil war with a secessionist agenda, while the rural refugees became right-wing nationalists supporting the cause of the Hellenic state.<sup>22</sup> There were of course significant exceptions, such as the “red town” of Kilkis, but on the whole the rural refugees sided with the authorities against the left-wing rebels.

The various stages of interwar economic development may be summarized as follows: From 1923 to 1927 the economy faltered under the pressure of insuperable odds as governments tried to buttress the value of the drachma and alleviate the plight of the refugees. Between 1927 and 1932 the drachma was stabilized and growth was resumed but soon foundered on the international economic crisis. In 1932 Greece was obliged to suspend interest and amortization payments on its foreign debt. The years up to the war were dedicated to the management of the crisis caused by the default.<sup>23</sup>

## THE TURBULENT INTERWAR PERIOD (1923–41)

The “Catastrophe” deepened the divide between Venizelists and anti-Venizelists. Upon the collapse of the Asia Minor venture, a revolutionary committee led by colonels Nikolaos Plastiras, Stylianos Gonatas, and D. Phokas, forced King Constantine to abdicate. Eight politicians and senior officers were arrested and charged with high treason. The defendants were tried in November by a court martial and on the 27th of that month were found guilty as charged. Of these, Gounaris Protopapadakis, Baltazzis, Stratos, Theotokis, and General Hadjianestis faced the firing squad on November 28, 1922. With Constantine replaced on the throne by his son George and the royalist leadership decapitated, Venizelist politicians and military politicians, although divided in competing groups, determined politics for at least a decade.<sup>1</sup>

An abortive counter-coup launched by royalists and disappointed liberals in 1923 speeded up the end of the royal institution in Greece. The April 1924 plebiscite granted the republic an overwhelming mandate. There followed a period of instability and constant military interventions that led to the operatic dictatorship of General Theodore Pangalos in 1925. Instrumental in the trial and execution of the six anti-Venizelist leaders in 1922, Pangalos sought allies from the camp of his former enemies when Venizelist politicians disavowed his regime. He was overthrown by his former military followers in 1926. An all-party government restored normality during the period 1926–8 and paved the way for Venizelos’s return to active politics after a long absence.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the expectations that his return generated, Venizelos’s last term in power was mainly successful only on the foreign policy front. In terms of foreign policy developments the interwar period constituted a radical departure from the patterns of the past. After 1923, with the end of her irredentist claims, Greece pursued the consolidation of

her territorial integrity but found little willingness on the part of Britain and France to guarantee it. The former's prolonged abstention from Balkan and Eastern Mediterranean power politics gave Italy the opportunity to fill the regional power vacuum. France encouraged the formation of the "Little Entente" and signed separate treaties with Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia to discourage a German revival and the ever-growing appetite of Italy. Between 1923 and 1928 Italy emerged as a formidable threat to Greek security. In August 1923 Italian troops occupied the island of Corfu and forced Greece to assume responsibility and pay reparations for the mysterious assassination of an Italian general in Epirus.

Disillusionment with the concept of collective security as it was championed by the League of Nations drove Greece to a series of bilateral agreements and treaties with its neighbors. The Treaty of Friendship with Italy in 1928 – masterminded by Venizelos – pulled Greece out of its diplomatic isolation. In 1930 Venizelos signed an accord with Turkey's Kemal Atatürk settling all remaining questions between the two former foes that formed the cornerstone of a lasting relationship. While improving relations with Italy, Venizelos assured Britain of Greece's friendship even at the price of discouraging an outbreak of Cypriot revolt against British rule. With all his Balkan neighbors, except Bulgaria, Venizelos established good bilateral relations.

The Cretan statesman's bilateralism was reversed by Panagis Tsaldaris, who won the elections of 1933. The Treaty of February 1934 between Greece, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Turkey was heralded as introducing a new era in Balkan politics. However, instead of securing the Balkan powers from European antagonisms, the pact – shunned by Albania and Bulgaria – invited great power disputes into the region. Venizelos, who had tried to keep Greece out of an international conflagration and to avoid an entanglement with Italy if the latter attacked Yugoslavia, criticized the treaty. With the rift between Britain and Italy after the Abyssinian crisis of 1935, and Greece's attachment to British interests, the way for the Italian attack of October 1940 was set.<sup>3</sup>

The Venizelist coup of 1935 against Tsaldaris's government to block an alleged return of George II to the Greek throne speeded up the process it intended to forestall. In the June 1935 elections the Venizelists abstained, protesting the continuation of martial law. The Populists under Tsaldaris therefore won a predictable landslide victory with 287 seats out of 300.

On October 10 Tsaldaris was forced to resign by a group of determined royalist officers. He was replaced by one of the protagonists of interwar military interventions and the man responsible for quelling the 1935 coup, Georgios Kondylis. A one-time champion of the republic, General Kondylis declared its abolition in Parliament and held a fraudulent plebiscite on November 3 which, as was expected, endorsed the reinstatement of the monarchy.

King George II was restored to his throne after 12 years in exile and with an enormous grudge against the Greeks for having mistreated his family. His dislike for Greek politics and politicians, his devotion to Britain and its interests, and his single-minded dedication to what he considered a thankless duty, constituted the most striking features of his reign. The eldest son of the popular and highly controversial King Constantine, he inherited none of his father's attributes and shortcomings. Even as a young man he was austere, withdrawn, diligent, and dependable. He lacked the charisma and extrovert qualities that made an idol of Constantine to his followers, but inherited nevertheless a camp of devoted royalists who made his return to power possible in 1935. George was deeply affected by his family's political misfortunes and his own forced departure from the throne of Greece in 1923. His unhappy marriage to a Romanian princess and his lonely years in exile moulded the psyche of a monarch least likely to resume his royal duties with love for his particular subjects. During his long exile he found true solace in London.<sup>4</sup>

The elections of January 26, 1936, conducted under a system of proportional representation, were inconclusive. The Liberal Party and its allies won 141 seats but the Populists and the Royalists secured 143. The Communist Party became the balancing factor with its 15 seats. General Alexander Papagos as minister of war warned his royal patron that the army would not tolerate a government supported by the Communists and was immediately sacked by the king. George replaced Papagos with Metaxas and later, when Constantine Demertzis, head of the caretaker government, died suddenly, Metaxas was made prime minister. The year proved a threshold in Greek politics. Most of Greece's interwar personalities in politics died (Venizelos, Tsaldaris, Kondylis, Koundouriotis, Zaimis, and Papanastasiou) leaving a void difficult to fill and a king in full control of the armed forces. George plunged Greece into dictatorship on August 4 by taking Metaxas's advice to suspend a number of articles of the constitution.

Ioannis Metaxas will be remembered for his authoritarian rule of the Greek state and his decision to reject the Fascist ultimatum of October 28, 1940, thus bringing Greece into the Second World War. During the various phases of his turbulent public life he assumed different personae. As an able staff officer dedicated to the institution of the monarchy, Metaxas became a fiery exponent of the anti-liberal cause. Although a protagonist in the "Great Schism" between King Constantine and Prime Minister Venizelos, he was not among those who were rewarded for their services to the Crown after the royalist victory in the 1920 elections and the subsequent restoration of Constantine. A critic from the outset of the Asia Minor expedition in 1919, he consistently refused the command of the Greek forces in Smyrna and predicted the ultimate collapse of operations. He fled Greece in 1923 after the abortive coup against the emergency military government set up after the 1922 disaster, only to return in 1924 as the first royalist to recognize the Hellenic Republic. Between 1924 and 1928 Metaxas underwent a metamorphosis. He became a supporter of parliamentary rule, created his own "Eleftherofrones" (Free Thinkers) Party and served as minister in a government of national unity.<sup>5</sup>

Had he not been a maverick within the anti-Venizelist camp, Metaxas might have been chosen for its leadership. He was surely well equipped to present Venizelos with a formidable opposition, but lacked the flexibility and self confidence that allowed politicians of lesser force and ability to prevail. Metaxas ranked with Venizelos himself in political foresight, but fell short in terms of overall personality and charisma. When the paths of the two men crossed once again in the elections of 1928, Metaxas's dreams of parliamentary glory were shattered. He emerged from his defeat bitter and vindictive. His old antidemocratic inclinations were revived and his hatred for the politician who was a constant obstacle to his plans became an obsession. The incubation of the dictator lasted for almost eight years. In the meantime his political opponents unwittingly paved the way for his advent.

Metaxas's cabinet members and close associates were individuals of diverse political background who did not belong to the mainstream of the Liberal or the Populist (Conservative) parties. The minister of the interior, Th. Skylakakis, was an old friend of extreme right-wing leanings; the chief of security, C. Maniadakis, was a cashiered officer of the 1923 coup; the minister for press and tourism, Th. Nicoloudis, was a member of the "Eleftherofrones" Party; Ioannis Diakos, although he

never held a cabinet post, was the dictator's closest confidant and remained unknown even after the dictatorship; minister-governor of the capital, C. Kotzias, was an anti-Venizelist who aspired to become Metaxas's successor; the minister of labor, A. Dimitratos, was a former trade unionist of small significance. Diakos's own devastating appraisal sums up their weight in the system: "The dictatorship ... was like the number 1,000,000 but without Metaxas only six zeroes."<sup>6</sup> Alexander Papagos, commander-in-chief of the Greek forces in the Greco-Italian war, was overshadowed both by Metaxas's involvement in military affairs and King George's patronizing attitude. His stature as the rallying point of an entire political cause came much later in his life, when he assumed full responsibility and credit for the civil war campaign of 1949. Papagos was born in Athens in 1883. A young man of good breeding and family ties with the royal court, he studied in a cavalry academy in Brussels and subsequently entered the corps that produced few generals in the Greek army. His loyalty to the Crown throughout its period of tribulations earned him a dismissal from the army in 1917. He was reinstated in 1920 after Venizelos's electoral defeat and the royalists' return to power and saw action in Asia Minor. He was dismissed again in 1923 for his role in the abortive coup that sought to purge the army of the enemies of the monarchy and was readmitted in 1927 as part of a reconciliation between Venizelist and anti-Venizelist politicians. He was instrumental in the restoration of the monarchy in 1935 and was appointed minister for military affairs in the caretaker government under Demertzis.<sup>7</sup>

### Greece's Finest Hour

The war compelled Britain and Greece to search for ways of cooperation in the economic field. Already in the spring of 1939, the governments of the two countries had negotiated an agreement by which Britain would provide Greece with export credits for €2 million at 5 percent interest per annum, to be repaid over 20 years. In the autumn, a war trade agreement was signed, by which Greece undertook to fix a maximum for the export from Greece to Germany of such commodities as cereals, fruits, vegetables, oil, tobacco, and practically all metals, while Britain undertook to put no obstacles in the way of importation into Greece of certain products, such as cereals, coal, and petroleum.





**Figure 8.1** On October 28, 1940, following an Italian ultimatum, Greece refused to concede to Fascist occupation. The victory of the Greek forces against Mussolini's legions inspired the victims of Axis aggression in the darkest hour of Europe. *Punch* magazine celebrated Greek defiance with this cartoon

Finally, in January 1940, a definitive war trade agreement was signed between the two countries, as well as a shipping agreement, by which the Greek ship-owners undertook, with the encouragement of the Greek government, to provide Britain with 31 ships and to ensure that another 29 would be put forward, amounting to about 500,000 tons.

The Greek government tried to explain this departure from professed neutrality to the Germans in terms of Greece's desperate position with respect to her dependence on British coal and the income derived from shipping, and assured the Germans that Metaxas wished not only to maintain, but even to expand, Greco-German trade. Naturally, the Germans remained skeptical. In August 1940, and as the volume of Greek exports to Germany appreciably dwindled, the Germans informed Metaxas in plain and threatening language that they believed the Greek government had to sign a commercial agreement with Germany,

which was an infraction of the Anglo-Greek war trade agreement.<sup>8</sup> In 1940, Greece's unconvincing neutrality and unmistakable leaning toward Britain were the result of the cumulative forces of the war and the willingness of the Greek government to cooperate with the British.

On August 15, 1940, the cruiser  *Elli*  of the Hellenic Royal Navy partook in the celebration of the Assumption, a day of pilgrimage to the holy icon of the Virgin Mary in the island of Tenos. The vessel was torpedoed in the harbor and sunk by an unidentified (Italian) submarine. A few months later, at 3 a.m. on October 28, the Italian Ambassador delivered to Metaxas an ultimatum demanding the right of passage for Italian troops through Greek soil within three hours. Upon refusal of this crass demand, the streets of Athens were filled with jubilant crowds celebrating the declaration of a just war. Never before had there been such unity behind the decision of a Greek government.

As opposed to the public's enthusiasm, the attitude of the High Command during the initial stages of the war was one of pessimism about the ability of the Greek forces to repulse an Italian attack against a position which was difficult to defend. The line of defense in Epirus and Western Macedonia, thinly manned until a general mobilization, was regarded as a lost cause. The Epirus division was expected to fight the enemy only in order to delay its advance, giving ground southward up to the lower Arachthos River where it could engage the enemy in decisive battle.<sup>9</sup> On the third day of the Italian attack the division was ordered not to engage the Italians on the advanced Elaia-Kalamas line, which ran parallel to the Greco-Albanian frontier. In the face of such orders, the decision of the divisional commander to stand and fight on the Elaia-Kalamas position was not only an act of courage but the wisest choice a commander could make. On October 30, General Haralambos Katsimetros issued an order to his officers and men calling on them to look forward and not backward: "Everyone's eyes must be directed forward at all times; and in everyone's thoughts and actions the spirit of decisiveness and offence, not retreat, ought to prevail."<sup>10</sup> The spirit of the Greek streets had reached the front. Several weeks later the Greek forces, after a miraculous advance, pinned the Italian army deep into Albanian territory.

The Italian attack on Greece in October 1940 placed the country in a strange position. The attack made Greece a belligerent, but only against Italy. To the extent that the Italian attack was a pre-emptive strike

against a potential British base, the Greco-Italian war was part of the European war, but only indirectly so. Greece was not at war with Germany, yet nor was she an ally of Britain. Greece was allied to Britain only as long as she fought against Italy. Indeed, as far as Britain was concerned, the attack on Greece created an inconvenient commitment. Britain had given Greece a solemn assurance that she would come to her assistance if she became the victim of aggression and chose to oppose the aggressor, but was not bound by an alliance. When Churchill was pressed a few days following the Italian attack to send assistance urgently to Greece, he replied that no explicit pledges of support had been made, except that Britain would do her best.

The Greek counterattack, which was launched in mid-November and met with unexpected success, allowed Metaxas to press the British for assistance with more conviction than hitherto. Greek successes in the field presented the British with an opportunity to transfer their main war-effort against Italy from North Africa to the Balkans. What the Greek government wanted the British military presence in Greece for was to help knock Italy out of Albania and what they essentially meant by a Balkan front was a deterrent to Germany, not so much a theater of offensive operations – for which the British were known by then to lack the necessary forces. The invitation to send forces to Greece materialized one day before Metaxas revealed his reservations about Greek participation in the proposed meeting of Allied governments.<sup>11</sup>

The Italian action against Greece, which from the start had been unwelcome to the German military, became, in the light of the plans to attack the Soviet Union in the spring, an inconvenient factor which offered Britain the opportunity to establish herself in Greece and impede the planned thrust to the East. A British foothold in the Balkans would have endangered Germany's new venture in more ways than one. Besides the real and present danger to the Romanian oilfields, to which the Germans had always been alive, Britain's military presence was a potential threat to the right flank of the German forces, if this presence were to develop into something similar to the Allied Thessaloniki front in the First World War. Germany's planned action against Greece, therefore, was not so much in support of Italy's deteriorating position in Albania as the British position in Greece.<sup>12</sup>

Metaxas was reluctant to provoke Germany before the war against Italy was brought to a successful end. This was an attitude that reflected the ambiguous position of Greece vis-à-vis the belligerents and the

self-defeating effort of the Greek government to preserve that position in the vain hope that the war against Italy in Albania could be brought to a successful conclusion before the weather conditions permitted the Germans to invade the Balkans. In rejecting (in late December 1940) a British proposal to station air forces at Thessaloniki, Metaxas assured the British that, after defeating the Italians, the Greeks would help them against the Germans as well.

The British, ever since Italy consolidated its presence in Albania in 1939 thus posing a direct threat to Greece, had done very little to steady the course of Greek policy. Metaxas's devotion to the British connection was not enough by itself to ensure that Greek policy would be preoccupied less with the war in progress in Albania and more with the expected onslaught from Germany. Like all war fronts, the Albanian front had acquired its own momentum and requirements, which no responsible leader could possibly ignore. Pressure at this crucial juncture to change Greek war priorities in favor of a front to hold a German attack in Macedonia contributed to a serious, though not quite apparent at the time, divergence of views between the government and the military leadership of Greece.

The position Metaxas stated to the British before he died in late January was that Greece, although determined to resist a German attack, would in no way provoke it unless Britain was in a position to make the necessary forces available in Greek Macedonia. In view of the limited numbers the British were in a position to send to mainland Greece and the Greek refusal to accept these forces and organize a line of defense before the Germans would be able to move south in the spring, the Greek political and military leadership looked forward to a quick and honorable defeat by the Germans. It was the position one could expect from a small country with scant resources faced with the might of a great power.<sup>13</sup>

By the end of 1939, war in Europe obliged the Greek government to allocate an additional 1,167 million drachmas for military appropriations. This unforeseen expenditure burdened budget estimates by 10 percent. Mussolini's attack on Greece upset the tentative balance of the economy. Land and sea transports were disrupted, and the mobilization of most able-bodied men affected production. Extraordinary measures were taken to prevent an acceleration of decline. Withdrawals from bank accounts were curtailed, the Athens stock exchange was closed, and all exports and imports were handled by public agencies. The

financial burden of the war was met with increased taxation, a war lottery, and British loans without specific terms of repayment. An increase in note circulation was accompanied by the scarcity of consumer goods and shortages of basic raw materials. By the spring of 1941, commodity prices had risen by 50–150 percent above pre-war levels. Occupation dealt the economy its deathblow and destroyed the very basis of Greece's productive capacity for many years to come.<sup>14</sup>

## OCCUPATION AND CONFLICT (1941–9)

The purpose of Hitler's attack on Greece under the code name "Maritsa" (April 6, 1941) was to secure his Balkan flank from British diversions before the invasion of the Soviet Union. The blitz of the German advance from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia did not give the Greeks time for a re-entrenchment of their units in Albania and Macedonia, along a new line of defense, south of Thessaloniki. The troops in the fortified Metaxas line, overlooking Bulgaria, did their duty against the German armored divisions but were soon outflanked by the force that entered Greece from Yugoslavia. On April 20, General George Tsolakoglou, commander of the western Macedonian army, took it upon himself to end the war as the German forces approached Athens. He negotiated an armistice two days after the suicide of Prime Minister Alexander Koryzis. As the king and his government were being evacuated to Crete, Emmanuel Tsouderos, a Cretan banker of Venizelist affiliations, was appointed prime minister.

The island of Crete, which was expected to become a fortress of resistance, fell to the Germans following an airborne attack on May 20. The king and Tsouderos escaped to Egypt and from there were taken to London. Greece's long winter under German, Italian, and Bulgarian occupations, began.

The period of foreign occupation (1941–4) and the untold suffering it caused the Greek population has become the object of a vast body of literature. Given the intense politicization of the subject there is still controversy over what exactly happened. There is little doubt that the new force in domestic affairs was the Greek Communist Party (KKE) which had never exceeded 9 percent in pre-war elections. During the Italian attack, the imprisoned secretary-general of the party, Nikos Zachariadis, urged his comrades to rally round the government and resist the invasion. He subsequently denounced his initial stance as a forgery of the dictatorship

and although he was taken by the occupation authorities to the Dachau concentration camp for the duration of the war, his party, under Georgios Siantos, became the bulwark of resistance against Fascist and Nazi occupation. The Communist-dominated National Liberation Front (EAM) was founded in September 1941 and exhibited extraordinary initiative during the winter of 1941–2 which claimed tens of thousands lives, mainly from starvation in the urban centers.

ELAS, the military arm of EAM, was founded in December 1941 and began its activities in the spring of 1942 under the leadership of Aris Velouchiotis (the pseudonym of Athanasios Klaras). The EAM-ELAS introduced a *modus operandi* hitherto unknown to the individualistic Greeks and alien to their traditional way of life. It demanded blind obedience and discipline from its members and expounded values imported from the Third International. It was precisely its experience in the underground movement during the Metaxas persecution and the single-minded dedication to its cause that made it the dominant force of resistance against the Germans.

Paradoxically, ELAS was most effective in the countryside where it introduced rules and punitive action, thus becoming a state within a state of chaos. It also secured the peasant populations from local bandits and provided for the unimpeded circulation of goods. In the urban centers the refugee settlements became steady sources of EAM support and the collective activities introduced by the Metaxas regime constituted a stepping stone to Communist collective solidarity.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike its interwar predecessors who had underestimated the appeal of nationalism and chose to fall in line with Comintern in recognizing the succession of Greek Macedonia for the creation of a new state entity, EAM-ELAS relayed a nationalist-revolutionary message. Its war against the occupation, however, was only the beginning of a transformation of the country from a bourgeois state into a one-party, popular democracy. Unlike other resistance movements, such as EDES (Ethnikos Dimokratikos Ellinikos Syndesmos), under Venizelist officer, Napoleon Zervas, or EKKA (Ethniki Kai Koinoniki Apeleutherosi), under another Venizelist, Dimitris Psarros, EAM-ELAS was bent on dominating the political scene even before the departure of the German army. The skirmishes between ELAS and other resistance organizations were an overture of a civil war that would erupt in December 1944.

The German occupation authorities, although they allowed the Italians to administer the lion's share of Greece's domain, made sure to

exploit such minerals as bauxite and nickel that were necessary for the war effort. Much of the rest of the economy was plundered to the point of collapse. The unbridled issue of currency generated rates of inflation that reduced trade to barter. The quisling governments of Tsolakoglou and Logothetopoulos were mere puppets of the Italians and after the surrender of the latter, the Germans. Ioannis Rallis, a former minister in a Panagis Tsaldaris government, was the partial exception to the rule of total subservience to occupation authorities. He assumed the office of prime minister in April 1943 when the fortunes of war no longer favored the Axis. Furthermore EAM-ELAS enjoyed superiority in the field of resistance and promised to play a leading role in post-liberation Greece. Non-Communists had relied mostly on Greek performance in the Albanian front and some, as Georgios Kaphandaris, believed that Greece should abstain from further blood-letting. With few exceptions, bourgeois politicians and officers kept themselves clear of the resistance. Rallis formed the notorious "Security Battalions," consisting mainly of rightist elements and which were led by certain Venizelist officers. The latter saw their chance of getting even with remnants of the Metaxas regime in the Tsouderos government for having been left out of the Albanian war and its glory. The battalions launched the first concentrated action against EAM-ELAS and subsequently became its primary target.<sup>2</sup>

Early in 1944 the end of the German war effort appeared imminent. Defeat in Stalingrad and North Africa and the advance of the Red Army in central Europe and the Balkans enhanced the influence of EAM and made the British more determined not to allow Greece to fall into the hands of the Communists. Since Britain had no soldiers to spare for a Balkan landing operation, it had to wait until the Germans evacuated the country in an exceedingly slow pace.

The Plaka agreement of February 29 between the British government and the Greek resistance organizations constituted an armistice among the warring factions in Greece. In April however ELAS forces attacked EKKA and killed its leader, Psarros. The resistance authority also known as "Political Committee of National Liberation" (PEEA) represented by its Socialist president, Alexander Svolos, condemned the act but the incident allowed the new prime minister of the Greek government in exile, George Papandreou, to accuse the KKE of attempting to monopolize power in Greece. Despite Svolos's efforts to reconcile the British with PEEA the rift between the two lasted until the end of July 1944



when the Soviet mission under Lieutenant-Colonel Grigori Popov reached the Greek mountains. The Soviets might have advised the KKE leaders to show more flexibility because soon after Siantos and Ioannides decided to join the Papandreou government.

Operation Manna, as the landing of British troops in Greece was named, was decided in Rome on August 21 by Churchill. Supreme commander of the Mediterranean allied forces, General H. Maitland Wilson would assume control of the operation and General Ronald Scobie became the commander of Force 140. In the meantime as the Germans left Greece the clashes between EAM-ELAS and the Security Battalions commenced in earnest. Between September 8 and 15 wholesale massacres of units accused of collaboration with the Germans took place in the Peloponnese. In Meligala, a village close to Kalamata, about 1,800 people were allegedly executed by EAM-ELAS forces. The British were therefore compelled to split their landing force so that smaller units might reach the Peloponnese in time to prevent further carnage.<sup>3</sup> Yet EAM-ELAS had replenished its arsenal with the booty of weapons it acquired from the Security Battalions and felt ready to strike a partnership with Papandreou. On September 3, six ministers representing EAM joined the government in exile that had been transferred to Italy. What is more surprising is that the EAM-ELAS representatives accepted the terms of the Caserta agreement of September 26 between Wilson, Papandreou, Stephanos Saraphes (military commander of ELAS), and Zervas and therefore authorized the British military presence in Greece. The Caserta agreement caused great confusion among the Communists in Greece. Some argued that the party should sever its ties with the Papandreou government but the leadership took a more flexible position of "wait and see."

The British forces reached Athens on October 14 and Papandreou followed on October 18 with Scobie, Macmillan, and Leeper. He was immediately faced with three burning problems: reconciling left-wing demands to met out justice against the collaborationists, stabilizing the collapsing economy, and disarming the guerilla forces. Given that most of the country was controlled by EAM-ELAS, except for a part of Athens and Piraeus, Papandreou relied almost entirely on the British to put his agenda into effect. In its own domain EAM had abolished the use of money and had already set up courts to try those considered guilty of collaboration. EAM-ELAS graffiti reigned on the walls of Athens and Thessaloniki while law and order was administered by 3,000 policeman

under the leadership of Angelos Evert, a British spy who held his post during the occupation and had saved the lives of many Athenian Jews. His force however was not tainted with collaboration as was the case with the gendarmerie – a prime ELAS target.

The Mountain Brigade and the Sacred Battalion were the only regular units to reach Athens after the Middle East Brigades were decimated by consecutive coups between 1943 and 1944.<sup>4</sup> Whereas Papandreou intended to include these units in the future regular army of Greece, EAM wanted them disbanded along with the units of ELAS and EDES. The arduous horse-trading that ensued between Papandreou and the EAM ministers over the future configuration of the Greek army ran into British intransigence. The position of the two sides on the eve of the breakdown of negotiations on November 28 was accurately described as follows: “The Left would accept either total demobilization, followed by the creation of a new army in which they expected to have influence in proportion of the size of ELAS, or the retention of an ELAS force equal to all other forces combined. Papandreou and the British would not accept the dissolution of the regular military units, nor the retention of a proportionate ELAS one. Thus the minimum demands of one side exceeded the maximum concessions which the other side was willing to make.”<sup>5</sup>

The confrontation of EAM-ELAS with the British forces became inevitable after the resignation of the EAM ministers on December 2. Yet the ELAS troops, although they enjoyed numerical superiority during the first week of skirmishes, appeared reticent to clash with the British. When an ELAS regiment reached Athens on December 4, it was surrounded, and peacefully transported outside the city without offering resistance to the British. Communist forces however did attack gendarmes and police stations.<sup>6</sup>

ELAS began its war with the British on December 11 and Scobie proved less than ready for the occasion. The need for men to recapture the city obliged the British to recruit into the “National Guard” elements from the “Security Battalions” and extreme anti-Communists from the royalists of “X.” By December 29, 7,540 prisoners from Athens had been shipped to Middle East camps while ELAS had captured 1,100 British soldiers and officers.<sup>7</sup>

The misconceived EAM practice of rounding-up hostages from middle-class neighborhoods of the city and making them walk miles under terrible circumstances earned the Left much adverse publicity. Many of

the atrocities committed by EAM-ELAS haunted the party years after the event. Individuals incarcerated for collaboration were let free and acts of revenge against the Communists and sympathizers throughout 1945–6 produced paramilitary bands of vigilantes that terrorized the countryside.

By early January the British numbered around 75,000 men and the “National Guard” possessed 23 battalions. EAM-ELAS was forced to give up the capital Athens on January 6. British intervention in Greece established a precedent soon to be repeated in Eastern Europe by Stalin.

Interpretations of the motives of the two sides to the conflict abound. Both Iatrides, who offered the first documented non-Communist interpretation<sup>8</sup> and more recently, David Close, generally agree that mistrust, rather than design, guided KKE decisions. According to Close the Communists preferred a principled take-over, without excluding violence if all else failed. What appears to be contradictory behavior (joining the government in exile while preparing for war with it) is merely the simultaneous preparation for two different courses of action.<sup>9</sup> Right-wing interpretations evoke the revolutionary nature of the party and therefore consider its coup of December 1944 inevitable. The left places the entire blame on British imperialism, although during the first stages of the conflict EAM-ELAS were better equipped for it.

Nikos Marantzidis, in his 2008 compendium for a televised version of the 1943–9 period (*O emphylios polemos*), discussed the view of Philippos Eliou, a respected intellectual of the Left. The latter believed that KKE’s decision to confront Papandreou was merely a scramble for position in a future power-sharing. Marantzidis rightly points out the futility of an armed attempt without the intention to capture power. The vanquished in any conflict have little to expect, besides the magnanimity of the victor.

## Varkiza and the Civil War

The December 1944 attempt of EAM-ELAS to usurp power marked the future of the Communist Party in public affairs. Its chance to become an important element in parliamentary politics through the influence it had gained during the years of occupation and resistance was forfeited in the party’s all out attempt to establish a monopoly of power in

December 1944. The decision of EAM-ELAS to confront a better equipped and organized British expeditionary force made Britain a permanent fixture in Greek affairs until the outbreak of the civil war in 1946. The atrocities committed by the guerrillas in Athens subsequently filled the jails with their numbers and those of sympathizers. Another consequence of that fateful December was the royalist backlash during the following years. An institution tainted by its identification with the Metaxas dictatorship and a king who could hardly warm the hearts of his subjects suddenly became a sanctuary of common people caught in the crossfire of a political anomaly. Throughout 1945 and the beginning of 1946 right-wing gangs and royalists reaped vengeance against their leftist adversaries.

The British under the Tories remained steadfast to the promise of a plebiscite that would decide the future of the monarchy. After the electoral victory of the Labour Party, British commitment to the Greek throne waned. Even before the British ambassador in Athens, Reginald Leeper, had favored governments under liberal or centrist politicians and made no secret of his disdain for the royalists. Under British pressure, King George in exile proclaimed Archbishop Damaskinos, Regent on December 30, 1944, and pledged not to return to Greece unless summoned after a plebiscite.

Damaskinos began his term in a chaotic post-December Greece as a pillar of resolve to maintain the balance between Right and Left. As the day of the electoral reckoning approached, he began to falter under the weight of his enormous responsibility. Damaskinos's first decision as regent was to select General Nikolaos Plastiras as prime minister. The Plastiras government was sworn in on January 3, 1945. By January 5 the regular units of ELAS evacuated Athens and the new centrist government could at last begin to put its program into effect. On January 10 Yannis Zevgos announced to General Scobie that the ELAS central committee was prepared to negotiate a truce. With 75,000 troops in Greece and a national guard of 15,000, the British felt secure in their dealings with the KKE. The seaside suburb of Varkiza became the subject of heated discussion in the years to come.<sup>10</sup>

On February 2 Ioannis Sophianopoulos, Petros Rallis, and Ioannis Makropoulos from the government faced Georgios Siantos, Mitsos Partsalidis, and Ilias Tsirimokos representing EAM. Unable to rely on their Communist allies for help since Moscow had already accorded recognition to Plastiras's government, the two Communist delegates

appeared demoralized and the Socialist, Tsirimokos, seemed ready to pledge allegiance to Damaskinos. The Varkiza Agreement was concluded on February 12 and was greeted with guarded optimism by the British and Greek governments. The most significant article of the agreement was no. VI stipulating the procedure for the demobilization of ELAS and the surrender of their weapons to the British. Article IX committed the government to hold a plebiscite within a year on the constitutional issue and general elections. With the economy in a state of collapse Plastiras also had to worry about a wave of right-wing revanchism which began to engulf the land. Despite his liberal credentials however, Plastiras had been divorced from Greek affairs since 1933 when he had to flee the country following his failed coup. He exercised power like a parochial patron and his ministers included his doctor and his personal friends. General Leonidas Spais, under-secretary of defense and an old hand in Venizelist military conspiracies, threatened to have a shoot-out with the royalists as in the good old days.<sup>11</sup> Plastiras had to resign when a newspaper disclosed his wartime effort to convince the Germans to mediate a peace between Greece and Italy.

Admiral Petros Voulgaris, a Venizelist who had nevertheless made a good name with the right wing by quelling the 1944 Middle-East coup in the navy, was sworn in office by Damaskinos on April 7, 1945. His major task was to maintain order in a country run by "national guard" vigilantes armed with the surrendered weapons of ELAS and scores to settle with the Communists.

The KKE was also being transformed rapidly. From the post-December defeatism of Siantos into the brave new world of Nikos Zachariadis, who was liberated from Dachau in May and came to Greece to resume the party's leadership. Given Soviet unwillingness to interfere in Greek affairs, the young KUTV (Communist University of the Toilers of the East) graduate took it upon himself to radicalize his party and to present Moscow with an accomplished fact. He was aided in his task by the intransigence of the royalists and the deplorable condition of the economy. Although industrialists were making wage increases of 100 and 150 percent, inflation overtook those figures by a wide margin.<sup>12</sup>

On July 26 Churchill and his party were suddenly removed from power and the Labour Party became the unexpected victor of the British elections. The electoral outcome raised the hopes of the Greek republicans and the pressure by the royalists for a speedy plebiscite while their fortunes were still high. According to the statistics of the Justice Ministry,

there were around 17,000 persons in prison, only 1,246 of whom were charged with war-time collaboration.<sup>13</sup>

Having failed to forge a royalist–republican coalition, Damaskinos assumed the premiership himself on October 17 only to give it up to Panayotes Kanellopoulos early in November. Although of anti-Venizelist background (the prime minister D. Gounaris executed in 1922 was his uncle), Kanellopoulos was considered friendly to the republicans. The trip of British under-secretary of state, Hector McNeil, to Athens proved the undoing of the Kanellopoulos government. In his November 15 speech McNeil gave the Greeks the impression that Britain was abandoning their country to economic catastrophe. The price of the sovereign hit the 78,000 drachmae mark and Kanellopoulos resigned.<sup>14</sup>

On November 22 Themistocles Sophoulis, the old mentor of the Venizelists, was sworn in office by Damaskinos who was rapidly approaching a nervous breakdown. By December 12 the price of the sovereign had reached 80,000 drachmae and the attempt to check inflation came to a halt. The new year witnessed the beginning of scuffles between right- and left-wing bands. The former had the advantage in the Peloponnese while the latter dominated northern Greece. As the designated date of the elections on March 31, 1945, approached the KKE prepared for its showdown with government forces.

Zachariadis's decision to abstain from the elections was not in accord with the views of the Kremlin, yet the Greek Communist leader had no intention of faltering. He promptly consulted with Yugoslavia and secured their support for his future undertaking. The Communist attack at the end of March against Litochoro, a village at the foot of Mount Olympus, was a preview of things to come.<sup>15</sup>

The elections favored the right-wing Populists and their allies with 206 seats in a Parliament of 354. An alliance of three Liberal formations under George Papandreou, Sophocles Venizelos, and Panayotes Kanellopoulos won 68 seats, and Sophoulis's Liberals only 48. The National Party under the leader of EDES, Napoleon Zervas, won 20 seats. The Allied Mission for Observing the Greek Elections (AMFOGE) declared the elections valid and estimated politically motivated abstentions as low as 9.4 percent. The KKE insisted that the percentage was as high as 51 percent since the electoral turnout was 49 percent of those on the registers.

Constantine Tsaldaris, a nephew of Populist interwar leader, Panagis Tsaldaris, became prime minister and arranged for the plebiscite that

would decide the fate of the monarch to be held on September 1, 1946. The outcome was 68 percent (1,136,289) in favor of the monarchy and 32 percent (524,771) against. King George returned to Greece on September 27, 1946, and died in April 1947. His younger brother Paul succeeded him to the throne.<sup>16</sup>

Tsaldaris proved a poor captain at the helm during the worst storm inflicted on Greece since the war of independence. He persecuted left-wingers relentlessly and pursued territorial claims on Albania. He did nevertheless succeed in securing the transfer of the Dodecanese Islands from the Italians at the Paris Peace Conference of 1947. With the civil war already in full swing the KKE was not banned until December 1947. The Truman Doctrine on March 12, 1947, allocated emergency aid to people struggling to resist armed minorities with authoritarian designs.<sup>17</sup> In the meantime Markos Vafiadis commanded the Communist-led Democratic Army (DSE) with guerrilla tactics and won several impressive victories before the demoralized national army began to regroup with American support and supervision.

Evidence from both sides leaves no room for doubt that the majority of the Communist guerrillas in the Greek civil war were conscripts from the areas where the Democratic Army (DSE) had entrenched itself, and primarily from northern Greece. The rebel army's failure from the outset to gain permanent control of any extensive tract of country, including major cities, and the government's slow but inexorable drive from the south, limited the rebel army's "free territory" to a belt along the Greek northwestern frontier, in the last phase of that protracted war.

Another determining factor, which differentiated the Democratic Army from its predecessor ELAS, was patriotism. Volunteer service with ELAS had been a higher calling than service with the Democratic Army. In the period of Axis occupation there was never any question which camp had right on its side. After the liberation and the December 1944 rebellion the KKE made a desperate effort to project the government it opposed as being kept in power not by the people but by foreign powers, and the DSE as a lineal and direct successor to ELAS, but the issues of right and wrong and one's patriotic duty to fight for the fatherland were no longer clear as they had been before.

An additional motive, normally passed over in silence, was peasant shrewdness. The embarrassingly large number of deserters from the National Army to the DSE in 1945 and the equally large number who deserted from the guerrillas to the government forces in 1947–9 were

not the result of a change in the political sympathies of the local peasants but reflected their calculations of which camp had the better prospects of bringing the other to its knees. Slav Macedonians formed the majority of the guerrillas. From the names of the surrendered guerrillas and of their home villages it appears that most of the rebels who gave themselves up in the last quarter of 1947 and the first half of 1948 were indeed Slav Macedonians – referred to indiscriminately by the right-wing press as “Bulgars,” and clearly demarcated from the “Greeks,” who as a rule had been “abducted” and were now returning to the fold.<sup>18</sup>

Greeks who, until fairly recently, identified the separatist ethnic agenda of the Communist insurgents of the 1946–9 civil war, usually belonged to a virulent anti-Communist category. However, Yugoslav archival material and Communist Party papers that have been published since confirm the views of pioneer works that revealed the nationalist undercurrents within the ideological war.<sup>19</sup> It is now evident that at least half of the DSE recruits harbored secessionist designs of setting up an independent Macedonian state with Thessaloniki as its capital. The divide between loyalists and separatists among the Slav-speakers was generated by the coming of refugees from Asia Minor in 1922–3. The newcomers from Turkey, who dreaded yet another migration should their new homeland secede from Greece, became the most ardent of patriots and therefore sworn enemies of the Communist insurgency. The idea of a fusion of the Greek, Serb, and Bulgarian Macedonian provinces, under the tutelage of a future Communist Bulgaria, was an invention of the Comintern meant to destabilize three bourgeois states. Between 1946 and 1948 the Democratic Army was to a significant degree dependent on the kindness of Yugoslavia, adjacent to the stronghold of the rebels, Socialist Republic of Macedonia.<sup>20</sup> DSE guerrillas were sheltered, fed, and indoctrinated by the republic and its claims on Greek territory (the “Aegean Macedonia”) were very much the reason for Tito’s vivid interest in the Greek civil war. The prospect of a Macedonian secession in favor of Yugoslavia and the influence of Skopje on the affairs of Greece were cut short by Tito’s clash with Stalin in 1948. The irredentist claims of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia were revived whenever Soviet–Yugoslav relations improved and, after the fall of Communism, were ultimately preserved in the schoolbooks of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

The arrival of American liaison officers in October 1947 placed in December under the Joint US Military Advisory and Planning Group



(JUSMAPG), began to inject the commanding officers of the national army with some optimism. A change in the army's tactics was put into effect by American and British military advisers under General James Van Fleet, who became director of JUSMAPG in March 1948. Van Fleet had a distinguished combat record in the Second World War, and was to become Douglas MacArthur's successor as commander of the United Nations forces in Korea in 1951. Whereas the British military mission before 1948 had confined itself to training, organization, and supply of equipment, American and British officers now participated both in the planning of operations and in their conduct down to divisional level. The influence of politicians over these matters was drastically reduced.

The new spirit of the US mission was to initiate operations against the rebels instead of waiting for their next strike. As Greek commanders gained experience, the role of the Anglo-American advisers later declined. With American funds to recruit, train, and equip reinforcements, the army reached a strength of 147,000 in 1948.

Another prerequisite of victory was a commander with full control of strategy and the conduct of operations. An obvious candidate was General Alexander Papagos, who had been chief of the general staff under the Metaxas dictatorship and then commander-in-chief during the Albanian war. Thus he would enjoy clear precedence in the military hierarchy, an advantage which chiefs of the general staff lacked. Even D. Giatzes, who held this post in 1948 and on the whole did his job capably, proved "strictly limited" in his capacity to impose his will on his subordinates, and this lack of an overriding authority accounted in part for a tendency common at all levels of the hierarchy to evade orders.

Hitherto, since 1945, the Supreme Council of National Defense (ASEA) – which included the three war ministers, the chiefs of the three branches of the armed forces, and the (non-voting) chiefs of the British and later US military missions – operated under the chairmanship of the prime minister. The ASEA dealt with the drafting of defense policy, the selection of the military high command, and allocation of military expenditure. With Papagos's appointment, the ASEA was replaced by a War Council with decorative functions, while the commander-in-chief acquired complete authority over all military issues. His suggestions, which could even include the imposition of martial law, were binding on the minister of defense. Papagos's extraordinary powers, granted due to the emergency conditions caused by the civil war, concentrated

authority over military decisions and facilitated the establishment of American influence, unhindered by political opposition. Although jealous of his own authority, Papagos tended to agree, both on the conduct of operations and the replacement of unsatisfactory officers, with the American advisers, and so ensured that their advice was implemented more effectively than previously.<sup>21</sup>

Other commanders who galvanized the national forces in 1949 were Tsakalotos, Venteres, Pentzopoulos, and Theodore Grigoropoulos. General Thrasyvoulos Tsakalotos, a monarchist of the era of the National Schism, managed to survive the purges of the interwar period in the army and made his name as commander of the Greek Mountain Brigade at the Battle of Rimini in Italy. Commander of C Corps in 1946, he became deputy of the commander-in-chief in 1947, Commander of A Corps in 1948, and assumed responsibility for B Corps as well. He cleared western Epirus in July–August 1948, stabilized the front before Vitsi in October, in December launched the operations which finally cleared the Peloponnese, before handing over the command to Pentzopoulos, pursued the force which had occupied Karpenision, and drove it away from Arta, and then led the final assault against Grammos in what was known as Operation Torch.

The national forces in mid-1949 consisted of 150,000 in the regular army, 50,000 in the National Defense Corps, 25,000 in the gendarmerie, 7,500 in the civil police, approaching 50,000 in home-guard units, as well as 14,300 in the navy, and 7,500 in the air force. The most significant advantages of the National Army over the DSE can be summed up as follows: The former could field balanced forces of combat arms, while the guerrillas could oppose it with only infantry units, supported by some field guns. The government forces were supported by supply and service elements. This provided them with strategic mobility and staying power. Finally, the government could recruit conscripts without harassment and could draw from the plentiful supplies of urban manpower.

While the national government mobilized massive forces, its opponents' resources dwindled. From an early stage of the war, the Democratic Army noticed that its sources of recruits and food were draining away, as the mountain villages were evacuated by the national forces. According to the best available estimates, the total number of these forced evacuees (who included a small minority of voluntary refugees) reached between 200,000 and 300,000 in 1947, and eventually

peaked at over 700,000 early in 1949. This was nearly 10 percent of Greece's population, and a high proportion of the inhabitants of the mainland mountains, whence came the overwhelming majority. Thus large areas of the Pindus range and the Macedonian Mountains were depopulated. To obtain food and recruits the DSE was forced increasingly to raid towns: thus the raid on Karditsa (a refugee center) yielded over 1,000 captives, and loot that was taken away by 200 carts, 500 mules, and three lorries. But such raids cost the attackers the lives of many experienced troops.

The final series of sweeps by the National Army began in the Peloponnese in December 1948. The national forces now took advantage of the winter weather, which made it more difficult for guerrillas to find food or shelter, or to move unobserved. The army applied the tactics of continuous pursuit by converging units which were echeloned in depth, while the guerrillas tried in vain to escape by scattering and lying low or filtering through the national lines. By the end of February 1949, the bulk of the 3,000–4,000 guerrillas in the Peloponnese had been captured or killed, and the rest were dwindling fugitives. Further north, the fortunes of war changed in mid-February, with the recapture of Karpenision and the defense of Florina. In March C Corps, under Grigoropoulos, moved onto the offensive in northeastern Greece, where after three months it forced the guerrillas back to the frontiers. In May–June, national forces successfully repeated in the southern and central mountains of the mainland the strategy which they had used in the Peloponnese. In July–August the National Army cleared the mountain strongholds near the northern frontiers where the bulk of the DSE was now concentrated. Its culminating victories were the successive capture of Vitsi and then Grammos, where DSE forces totaling 12,000, with 54 field guns, strongly resisted national forces over five times as great. The latter used aircraft – including, for the first time, a squadron of Hell-divers – with unprecedented intensity: in the 11 days of the two offensives, aircraft flew 1,450 sorties, using bombs, rockets, and napalm. After losing 3,000 killed or captured, the Democratic Army retreated in good order across the frontier on August 30.

The Battle of Grammos eliminated any serious threat by the DSE, but did not end guerrilla activity. After mopping-up operations in September, the number of Leftist guerrillas in Greece declined gradually: the National Army estimated that there were about 1,800 in October 1949, and 240 in November 1950. During this period a few small bands

re-entered the country from Albania and Bulgaria, and were fairly quickly suppressed. What was apparently the last sizeable band (i.e. over 50) was destroyed in Chalkidike, southeast of Thessaloniki, in January 1950, after hundreds of its civilian sympathizers were deported. A few acts of sabotage were reported in the following months. By their mere existence the guerrillas caused concern to the national forces, who spent much effort on patrols, and claim to have lost 201 lives in 1950. Further reason for anxiety was the presence in the countries north of Greece of much of the DSE (12,000 early in 1950, according to the Greek general staff). But there was no real prospect of its renewing the war, because the host governments now had no wish to help it do so. The KKE leaders in exile recognized their military weakness at the Seventh Plenum in October 1949 when they formally abandoned the war, while deciding to maintain pressure on the Greek government by sending into the country small guerrilla groups. These, however, were critically handicapped by lack of supply dumps, so that their main concerns were evasion and survival. Consequently the resettlement of mountain villages proceeded without serious hindrance, even in the regions which the DSE had recently dominated.<sup>22</sup>

Current scholarship on the civil war still reflects the political affiliations of the scholars in question. Left-wingers usually reject the rightist theory of three cycles, one during the occupation, the second in December 1944, and the third between 1946 and 1949. Given that it would have been impossible for any central planning to foresee the progress of the conflict this theory is indeed hard to validate. The view that the fratricidal struggle began toward the end of the occupation and continued on and off for six years, sounds more plausible.<sup>23</sup>

Figures on the fatalities of this war remained unreliable. Between 1948 and 1949 it is alleged that up to 15,000 soldiers of the National Army lost their lives, while 20,000 of DSE were also killed. Furthermore 4,000 civilians were killed by the rebels and 5,000 guerrillas were executed after they were captured.<sup>24</sup> New evidence introduces divisions to the conflict that have little to do with right and left ideology. Competition between families, clans, localities, and other factions, often cut across ideological camps and prove much more convincing motives for violence.<sup>25</sup> Therefore certain aspects of the civil war refer us to social structures that go back to the Greek war of independence and the traditional segmented society that survives modernity and post-modernity. Kalyvas's observation adds another yet dimension to the study of the

Greek civil war: "There is a tendency to see violence as being externally imposed on unsuspecting and therefore innocent civilians – a perspective reinforced by the discourse of human rights and echoed in instrumentalist theories of ethnic conflict according to which individuals are perpetually manipulated by politicians. ... However, individuals cannot be treated simply as passive, manipulated, or invisible actors; instead, they often manipulate central actors into helping them fight their own conflicts."<sup>26</sup>

The failure of the rightist Prime Minister Constantine Tsaldaris to inspire the anti-Communist camp with a sense of purpose resulted in a center-right coalition under the veteran Liberal, Themistoclis Sophoulis in September 1947. Although Tsaldaris conceded to the arrangement due to American pressure, the coalition was in fact an act of reconciliation between the bitter interwar foes brought about by dire necessity. When this necessity was over, the two diverged again and the Liberals fragmented into so many groups that henceforth they would form governments only if they coalesced. Furthermore the Liberals were handicapped by the loss of their republican platform after the return of the king in 1946, while the royalist Right basked in its triumph and benefited from the anti-Communist sentiment generated by the war. Contrary to the center forces, the Conservatives, with their stronger sense of identity and mission, would in time rally around two consecutive leaders between 1953–63 that would secure power for the Right for almost a decade.

## THE POST-CIVIL-WAR PERIOD (1949–67)

Greece's postwar history begins on August 30, 1949, with the conclusion of the last government operation against the Communist forces in the northwest. The civil war ended with nationalist victory in the field but the scars of the strife on society lasted. It took almost four decades for the chasm between victors and vanquished to be bridged and it was only after people finally ceased to address the issue, not out of fear but oblivion, that the civil war was really over.

The urgency of civil-war-related problems and the inability of a divided and paralyzed government to handle the domestic situation effectively led Greek politicians to allow the United States a significant presence in Greek internal affairs. The Truman Doctrine, officially announced on March 12, 1947, inaugurated an era of US involvement in Europe and an overt American role in Greek affairs. Greece's total share of the Marshall Plan, which was proclaimed in June 1947, was \$1.7 billion in economic aid (loans and grants) and \$1.3 billion in military aid between 1947 and the 1960s.

The fratricidal struggle that raged for four years aggravated conditions in the already ravaged country. To the 550,000 people (8 percent of Greece's population) who died during 1940–4 were added another 158,000 dead in the years 1946–9. Caught in the middle of a war between the government army and the Communist forces, Greek peasants and townspeople paid the highest price of this civil strife.

The post-civil-war period can be divided into five subperiods: a) 1950–3, the centrist intermission with three elections (1950, 1951, 1953) producing "a polarized multiparty" state of affairs; b) 1962–56, the creation of a rightist state under the Greek Rally of Field Marshal Alexander Papagos; c) the eight years of Constantine Karamanlis's National Radical Union, a period of stability and rapid reconstruction;

d) the elections of 1963–4 regenerating the centrist coalitions of the early 1950s as a major challenge to the Right dominating the state and its institutions; and e) the break up of the improbable coalition and the royal attempt to act as the regulator of politics (1965–7).<sup>1</sup>

The system of proportional representation adopted for the elections of 1946, 1950, and 1951 encouraged parties based on personalities rather than principles. Between 1946 and 1950 ten political parties were represented in Parliament. The national elections of March 5, 1950, earned more seats for the center but also produced new centrist fragments. The Liberal Party under Sophocles Venizelos won 56 seats, the new National Progressive Union (EPEK) under Nikolaos Plastiras 45 seats, and George Papandreou's party, 35. The Communist Party, banned in 1947, was represented by the Democratic Front, which won 18 seats in a Parliament of 250 deputies. The Populists, under Tsaldaris with 62 seats remained the largest party, but lost some of their 1946 gains.

In the 18 months of its duration the new Parliament produced five coalition governments, four under Plastiras. The instability that plagued the Assembly of 1950 became a serious impediment in the continuation of American economic aid. During the spring and summer of 1950 three center parties formed a coalition under Plastiras but in August Venizelos withdrew his party because he considered the prime minister exceedingly lenient toward detained Communists. A new election took place on September 9, 1951.

In the meantime Alexander Papagos began to emerge as a "deus ex machina" of the right wing that would extricate Greek politics from uncertainty. The commander-in-chief of the national forces in the civil war became the bone of contention between the royal court which had hoped to use him as its martinet and politicians who thought he would act as a palliative to political instability. Papagos however, had plans of his own. He soon made it abundantly clear to a disgruntled Crown that he had no intention of becoming its puppet. He resigned as field marshal and took part in the 1951 elections as head of the newly formed Greek Rally, imitating General De Gaulle's, *Rassemblement du Peuple Français*.

The elections of 1951, although conducted with a system of modified proportionality—designed to favor the larger parties, ended in deadlock. The right was the true victor since Papagos won 36.5% of the vote and 114 seats out of 258 in Parliament. (Tsaldaris all but disappeared). Center parties won on balance 132 seats but were divided into Plastiras's

EPEK (74 seats) and Venizelos's Liberals (57). George Papandreou was left out of Parliament and Tsaldaris, with only 2 seats, was marginalized. The representatives of the United Democratic Left (EDA) secured 10 seats.

After Papagos's refusal to form a coalition government, Plastiras was given a mandate to form a coalition with Venizelos. The new government's major tasks were to pass the 1949 constitutional draft through Parliament and to bring Greece into NATO. It managed both. The January 1, 1952, document was a revised version of the 1864/1911 constitution with little tolerance for trade unionism, freedom of the press, and acts of defiance against the state. This constitution reflected civil war polarization and the anti-Communist position of the victors. When the government passed a law in April 1952 commuting death penalties to life sentences and reducing the numbers of those imprisoned for sedition, from 14,000 in 1951 to 5,500 by the end of 1952, there was a strong reaction from the Greek Rally opposition. It was in this climate of intransigence that four Communists, with Nicos Beloyannis as their leader, were convicted for spying and executed.

Greece's accession to NATO was initially obstructed by Britain's own concept of Western defense and the opposition of certain Scandinavian countries to an overextension and therefore dilution of NATO's primary aims. When Greece and Turkey dispatched combat forces to South Korea in 1950, they were acting as members of the United Nations but their motive was in fact to override objections to their entry into NATO. As far as the United States was concerned, Greek and Turkish participation was planned to provide the missing link between its allies in NATO, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), and the security treaty of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (ANZUS). For Greek politicians of the Liberal coalition government which pressed for Greek membership, NATO not only provided an additional guarantee against Balkan Communism, it also constituted a door to a community of democratic European states and a partial emancipation from exclusive American influence. In September 1951, NATO foreign ministers in Ottawa approved Greek and Turkish entry. Two years later, the American military presence in Greece was consolidated by the signing of a bilateral agreement which provided the United States with the right to establish and supply its bases in Greece and to use Greek airspace. It also set out the legal status of US forces in Greece.



Prime minister Plastiras suffered a stroke in March 1952 and was replaced in his duties by Venizelos. Four deputies deserted the Center coalition producing a tie with the Greek Rally opposition. The government however was given a new lease of life by two runaway deputies of the United Democratic Left (EDA). Since EDA represented the outlawed Communist Party in Parliament the outcry this support caused was inevitable. Even Liberal George Papandreou declared that the government had ceased to enjoy a "national" majority. Bowing to pressure from the American embassy, the government under Venizelos accepted speedy elections with the simple majority system used in the 1928 and 1933 elections.<sup>2</sup> In the November 1952 elections the Greek Rally Party, with 49 percent of the vote, secured 247 seats in Parliament; the coalition of center parties polled 34 percent and won 51 seats, while EDA and the Populists were left out of Parliament. The bandwagon effect drew into the conservative camp even centrist figures such as George Papandreou.

The daunting task of Papagos's government was economic reconstruction. Between 1947 and 1957 American aid accounted for roughly half of state investment expenditure. Economic development however was entirely taken up by the Greek state after 1952. The Bank of Greece under American supervision maintained the stability of the drachma between 1947 and 1952 by operating a gold exchange standard, which allowed the sale of gold sovereigns upon demand. This practice was discontinued in 1952 in order to discourage the hoarding of gold coins. In 1953, the minister of coordination, Spyros Markezinis, devalued the Drachma by 50 percent and lifted most of the controls on the importation of goods. The measure made Greek products competitive in foreign markets and the price of gold enticed many to stop hoarding and (given high interest rates) to trust the banks with their savings. The drachma was stabilized and at last found its way into circulation. Prices of houses and dowries, nevertheless, continued to be quoted in sovereigns, at least until the early sixties, but inflation was down. The contribution of households to financing net capital formation rose from 28 percent in 1954, to 59 percent in 1961.

Markezinis's views in economic development persisted long after his resignation on April 3, 1954. His falling out with Papagos did not alter the government's financial policy: Free market economics and importation of foreign investment capital, combined with meager allocation of resources for social welfare, met with American approval and became the conventional wisdom of all conservative governments of the

following decade. Besides spurring growth these policies helped to concentrate wealth in a limited number of hands. The Ministry of Merchant Marine and the Greek Shipowners' Union were in harmony as the state helped the merchant marine rebuilt itself after the war and ship-owners in their turn made sure they employed Greek seamen.<sup>3</sup>

On December 15, 1954, Papagos restructured his government to include two deputy prime ministers, Panayotes Kanellopoulos and Stephanos Stephanopoulos, one of whom would replace him if he was debilitated by his poor health. Younger members of the party were given senior posts – the dynamic Constantine Karamanlis was given the Ministry of Transport and Public Works and the bright Panagis Papaligouras became minister of coordination. Papagos's health however deteriorated soon after.

Throughout his term in Athens, American ambassador John Peurifoy played a decisive role in Greek politics. Thanks to his preference for the simple majority system the Greek Rally Party won its resounding mandate in 1952. This victory however made the conservatives less malleable to American instructions. From the outset of his term the former commander-in-chief proved more dedicated to his patriotic quest than to his Western allies. Whereas Plastiras had discouraged the Greek Cypriots from demanding unification (*enosis*) with Greece in 1950, Papagos adopted the Archbishop of Cyprus Makarios's demand for recourse to the UN that had been overruled by the British authorities.

Occupied by Britain in 1878 and a British colony after 1925, Cyprus was no exception to the rule of anti-colonial struggles that rocked the British Empire after the war. Greek Cypriots, who represented 80 percent of the island's population, repeatedly appealed to Greek governments for support and hoped for unification (*enosis*) with Greece. Although Greek liberal politicians discouraged such pleas, it was the Conservative government of Alexandros Papagos that, in 1954, embraced the cause of the Greek Cypriots. When Archbishop Makarios, political and spiritual leader of the Greek Cypriot community, introduced the issue to the forum of the United Nations, Britain responded by bringing the previously neutral Turkish Cypriots and Turkey into the dispute. The foundations of future inter-communal conflict were thus laid and what began as a struggle for independence gradually deteriorated into a confrontation between Greeks and Turks.

On September 6, 1955, under the pretext of a staged bomb attack against the home of Kemal Atatürk in Thessaloniki (used as the

consulate of Turkey), an unprecedented outburst of violence erupted in Istanbul targeting the Greeks of the city. Houses, shops, and churches were plundered and some were set ablaze under the guidance of the Adnan Menderes government, exploiting the Cyprus issue between the two states. As of 1955 the Greek minority all but melted away in Istanbul. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles's admonitions to both victims and victimizers caused great resentment among the Greek public, while London began to discover partition as the most effective leverage against Makarios. The British ambassador in Ankara, disregarding American fears of destabilizing a friendly government in Athens, urged the Foreign Office to reach a decision for a partition of Cyprus between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.<sup>4</sup>

Papagos died on October 4, 1955, and King Paul gave Constantine Karamanlis the mandate to form a government. The young Karamanlis had made his mark as minister of public works, but the king's choice came as a surprise given Papagos's own preference for foreign minister, Stephanos Stephanopoulos. Karamanlis inaugurated a new era in Greek foreign policy as relations with Britain were totally eclipsed by American influence.

The first Karamanlis government was short-lived, but managed to accomplish several things before elections were proclaimed. Concerning Cyprus, an effort was made to encourage a solution through the Makarios–Harding (British high-commissioner) negotiations. More than one thousand political prisoners of the civil war were given their freedom and some individuals who had been deported to the islands were allowed to return to their homes. The government's most important measure was the revision of the simple majority system of 1954. According to the new electoral law, simple majority was maintained in smaller constituencies, whereas in larger constituencies, with over three seats at stake, some were determined by proportional representation.<sup>5</sup> The February 19, 1956, elections witnessed the appearance of Karamanlis's new party, the National Radical Union (ERE) and the first of future coalitions of the center, under the name of Democratic Union. Five centrist parties, including the remnants of the conservative Populist Party and the United Democratic Left (EDA), took part in the coalition. Although the Democratic Union won 48.2 percent of the vote and the National Radical Union 47.3 percent, the latter secured 165 out of the 300 seats in Parliament. It appears that women, voting for the first time in Greece, favored the handsome leader of the Conservatives but the



**Figure 10.1** President Charles De Gaulle of France met with Greek Prime Minister Constantine Karamanlis in Athens, on May 16, 1963. The visit was part of an effort to divert Greece's exclusive relationship with the NATO powers

electoral law did so even more. The true benefit of the 1956 elections, however, was reaped by the Left which broke out from its ostracism and was legitimized in its partnership with the center forces. Henceforth the Left would merge its own rhetoric with the anti-right parlance of the liberals.<sup>6</sup>

Following the elections a new crisis in Cyprus became the nemesis of the Karamanlis government. The breakdown of Makarios's discussions with British colonial secretary Lennox-Boyd, and the deportation of the former to the Seychelles Islands, generated anti-Western sentiments in Greece. Ideas of joining non-aggression pacts with Warsaw Pact countries in the Balkans as well as following the non-aligned example of Yugoslavia, and Egypt, were aired not only by the opposition parties, but conservatives as well. Between 1956 and 1958 the National Organization of Cypriote Fighters (EOKA), under Greek officer George Grivas, waged an unrelenting guerrilla war against the British forces on Cyprus. The British authorities soon diverted this struggle into an inter-communal strife between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, in which the former were fighting for self-determination and the latter opted for the partition of the island.

Relations between Greece and the Communist Balkan states remained troubled throughout the 1950s. During the German occupation, Bulgaria

had incorporated the eastern part of Macedonia and most of western Thrace and subjected its Greek inhabitants to a regime of oppression. Bulgaria's subsequent supervised transformation into a Communist state initially implied that its position in the community of Socialist republics could not match that of a self-liberated Yugoslavia with its impressive partisan resistance record. The Yugoslav policy of an autonomous Macedonia which would include Skopje, as well as the Greek and Bulgarian Macedonias, provoked a strong general reaction but initially failed to stir the Bulgarians. Since Yugoslavia initially had more influence with the Soviets, Bulgaria had to wait until Tito's break with Stalin before it could promote its own foreign policy goals over the issue of Macedonia. After Tito broke with the Cominform in 1948, the Bulgarians repudiated the existence of a separate Macedonian nation proclaiming instead their own historical mission in the area.

The fluctuations in Yugoslav–Soviet–Bulgarian relations usually had an impact on Greece. The clash between Tito and Stalin terminated Yugoslav support for the Greek Communist forces in the civil war and contributed to their defeat. In 1953 Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation followed by a formal alliance. The pact might have served as an indirect link between Yugoslavia and NATO had it not been for the former's rapprochement with Moscow in 1955 which effectively killed the treaty. Since the end of World War II, Greece had sought to secure the status quo in Macedonia making it clear that Greece had no claims against any of its neighbors and would tolerate none in return.

The Cyprus crisis almost cost Karamanlis his first elected term in office. The British hanged two young Cypriot patriots on May 10 causing riots in Athens and unrest within ERE among those who believed that the circumstances merited a national coalition rather than a single-party government. Karamanlis survived a vote of censure in Parliament and replaced foreign minister Spyros Theotokis, who resigned, with Evangelos Averov, henceforth his closest associate. Averov maintained his post until 1963. Karamanlis's turn to the USA for support bore fruit. Makarios was brought back from exile and was given a hearty welcome in Athens on April 17, 1957.

Since each government with its majority in Parliament determined the electoral system of the forthcoming elections, the issue always caused much excitement among party leaders. The 300 members of Parliament (since 1952) depended entirely on the interchange of

electoral systems – from proportional representation (PR) between 1946 and 1950, to reinforced proportional representation in 1951, to simple majority in 1952, to a mixed system in 1956. From 1958 onward, some form of reinforced PR turned up giving a majority of seats to the leading party.<sup>7</sup>

The elections of May 11, 1958, were conducted under an electoral law which was the product of an agreement between Karamanlis and George Papandreou. The system was criticized by prominent members of ERE causing the resignation of 13, including leading figures such as George Rallis and Panagis Papaligouras. ERE nevertheless won 171 seats, although its percentage of the vote fell from 47.4% in 1956 to 41.2% in 1958. The Liberal Party suffered an abject defeat with 20.67% of the vote and only 36 seats, while left-wing EDA, with 24.42%, got an unprecedented 79 seats in Parliament and became the official opposition.<sup>8</sup> Fear of polarization that would destroy the center in Greek politics drove center politicians and conservative opponents of Karamanlis to join forces under the aegis of the Center Union one month before the elections of October 1961.

By 1959 the Cyprus problem had become such a liability for Greece's relations with her major allies that Karamanlis was compelled to seek its speedy solution. Makarios in the meantime had abandoned *enosis* and embraced independence. In 1959 Karamanlis and Turkish prime minister Adnan Members drafted an agreement in Zurich for the creation of an independent republic of Cyprus. It provided for two British sovereign bases in the island and Britain, Turkey, and Greece became the guarantors of the new state's integrity. Given that each of these states caused, at different times, havoc in Cyprus, the provision proved a piece of black humor to accompany the birth of the new state. A Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice-president were given veto power over important legislation and the Turkish Cypriots were represented in the government and the civil service in a proportion over and above their numbers on the island. The two communities, that had played no part in drafting the Zurich agreement, signed the document in London.<sup>9</sup>

Cyprus however had acquired a symbolism for the Greeks that went beyond the mere creation of an independent state. Throughout the years of struggle for "enosis," the freedom fighters of EOKA were likened by Greece with the heroes of the Greek war for independence. In a rare outburst of sentiment Prime Minister Karamanlis invoked

Cyprus as the new Missolonghi (a town that resisted a long Ottoman siege): “Free besieged now and then and always we are racially isolated and geographically hemmed in and bounded.”<sup>10</sup> While patriotic outbursts constituted a trade-mark of the right-wing and Turkey had been reinstated in public perceptions as the traditional “other” (especially after the 1955 Istanbul riots), liberal intellectual George Theotokas tried to counsel moderation and voice concern for Greece’s security and international priorities.<sup>11</sup> Strangely enough, Karamanlis would have agreed with Theotokas in private. Although an undisputed patriot of the Right, he rated Greek development above irredentist ideals and frowned upon any anti-Western deviation that would militate against his program.<sup>12</sup>

In the midst of such developments the Communist Party of Greece tried to maintain a line similar to that of its Cypriot counterpart. Although its leaders considered the conflict between Western allies as a dent in the body of the alliance, at the same time EDA was bewildered by the public’s nationalist display of solidarity with the Cypriots. The post-1958 decline of EDA at the polls could be connected with the party’s ambivalence vis-à-vis the all pervasive issue of Cyprus.

American secretary of state Christian Herter shared with EDA his surprise at the total absorption of the Greeks by the Cyprus problem. Yet in spite of the bad blood that the issue generated between Greece and its allies, no Greek government, Conservative or Liberal, ever considered breaking its ties with the West. The Zurich–London agreements brought the country, vis-à-vis its allies, back to the fold of the alliance. At the same time the geostrategic importance of Greek territory began to lose its previous significance because of the technological breakthroughs in ballistic missiles. Deterrence had also made Greece less vulnerable to an attack from the Communist Balkans. As US aid dwindled so did Greek interest in the prospects of Western European unification increase.<sup>13</sup>

With Cyprus out of the way, at least until 1963, Greek public attention once more focused on domestic questions. Economic problems dominated opinion polls between 1958 and 1967. Almost 47 percent in 1958 and in 1967, after nine years of rapid growth, 42 percent of those asked considered improvement in the standards of living and the stability of prices the main political issues.<sup>14</sup>

The turning point in parliamentary politics was the elections of 1961. The reincarnation of the Center Union, consisting of an assortment of

parties ranging from Elias Tsirimokos's left, to Stephanos Stephanopoulos's right and S. Venizelos's center, was the single-handed accomplishment of septuagenarian George Papandreou. Karamanlis decided to have the elections at the end of October, following Greece's association agreement with the European Common Market in July.

The outcome was a clear majority for ERE with 176 seats and 50.8 percent of the vote. The Center Union, in coalition with Spyros Markezinis's Progressive Party, secured 100 seats and EDA carried only 24. The aftermath of the elections was dominated by a storm of accusations of electoral fraud against the government. Papandreou literally reinvented himself. From a failed politician he was elevated into a symbol of democratic solidarity. Those identified as the culprits of the fraud were army officers who co-operated with the police in the "Pericles Plan." Their aim was to intimidate voters in the countryside through local party strongmen and village militias, and switch votes in favor of ERE. The opposition's demand for new and fair elections was animated by its characterization as the "unrelenting struggle." In the midst of political unrest right-wing thugs in Thessaloniki killed Grigoris Lambrakis, a deputy of the EDA, in an abortive peace rally. That, along with his disagreement with the king on whether the latter and the queen should embark on a state visit to Britain, caused Karamanlis's resignation on June 11, 1963. A caretaker government under a supreme court judge supervised the elections of November 3, 1963.<sup>15</sup>

The Center Union won 138 seats, ERE 136, EDA secured 28, and Markezinis 2. Papandreou formed a government that lasted 55 days, long enough to draft policy that would win him a safe margin in the next elections. In the meantime Karamanlis had resigned from his party's leadership and left it to Panayotis Kanellopoulos. On February 16, 1964 Papandreou won a resounding victory with 52.7 percent and 173 seats. ERE under Kanellopoulos, in coalition with Markezinis's party, got 105 and EDA continued its decline with 22.

The long presence of American military missions in the Greek armed forces created a generation of officers who looked to the Americans rather than the Greek government for instructions. Most of them had earned their spurs during the civil war and subsequently criticized politicians for a lack of anti-Communist conviction. Clandestine organizations such as the National Union of Young Officers appeared after the 1958 elections when Communists and left-wingers became the second largest force in Parliament. The future dictator, George Papadopoulos,



had been the product of the Advanced Intelligence Centers that the Americans had installed in Greece's border area with the Communist north. There is little doubt that such officers and their superiors were responsible for whatever rigging took place in the elections of 1961. The 1964 triumph of the Centre had little direct impact on the ideological make-up of the officer corps. Defence minister Petros Garoufalias was a friend of the Crown and desisted from serious changes in the leadership of the armed forces. During this period a new secret military society with the name "Aspida" (shield) was uncovered by the press, which published allegations that its members sought to change the status quo in the army at the expense of the royalist establishment. Its alleged political leader was the son of the prime minister, Andreas Papandreou. When Garoufalias was told by prime minister to sack the chief of general staff, Ioanni Gennimata, in 1965 the former refused to obey and resigned. The prime minister attempted to assume the Ministry himself but met with the objection of young king Constantine who had inherited his high office after his father's death. Thus Greece entered its most virulent post-civil-war political crisis.<sup>16</sup>

During the first year of its term in power, the Centre Union made good its electoral promises of income redistribution and social justice. Farmers' pensions were increased, staple products were subsidized, and bureaucratic formalities were circumvented. An economy run for almost a decade on principles of sound home economics and, above all, a stable drachma was suddenly introduced to deficit spending and a belated Keynesianism. A revolution of expectations had been encouraged by George Papandreou and his Harvard-educated economist son, Andreas, and sustained with regular doses of populism.

By mid-1965 the economy began to feel inflationary pressures and the trade gap had widened visibly. There was however more freedom than at any time since the war and a slow repatriation of Greek workers from Germany began to occur. Perhaps the most important reform was that in education as the years of compulsory schooling rose from six to nine years and university fees were totally abolished. Finally, political prisoners still serving sentences were released.<sup>17</sup>

While Greece was undergoing its liberal transformation Archbishop Makarios, as president of the Republic of Cyprus, proposed 13 points to revise the constitution. According to the revisions all members of Parliament would be elected by a national constituency, separate courts would merge, and both president and vice-president would be deprived

of their veto power over legislation voted in Parliament. Turkey rejected Makarios's proposal and the two communities engaged in a bloody confrontation that nearly led to a Greek–Turkish war. Faced with the rift in NATO's southern flank the Americans began to consider a double *enosis* solution that would lock Cyprus into the western fold. George Papandreou considered the glory of an agreement that would bring the most substantial portion of Cyprus into Greece, but rejected the Acheson plans that would compensate Turkey with a foothold on the island. The populist reflexes of the Papandreou family and the elusive nature of Makarios's policy reaped confusion in domestic politics. George Grivas's own agenda in Cyprus served George Papandreou a fatal blow when he leaked Andreas's alleged involvement in the "Aspida" conspiracy.

The last contribution of the Americans toward defusing the crisis in Cyprus was Lydon Johnson's reminder to Turkish prime minister İnönü that the agreements of 1959 gave the guarantors the right to intervene only if the regime resulting from the London and Zurich agreements was in jeopardy. Undersecretary of state, George Ball, called for bilateral negotiations between Greece and Turkey, but George Papandreou refused to circumvent the government of Cyprus. Although the conflict ceased by 1967, inter-communal hatred ran deep.<sup>18</sup>

Relations of Center Union governments with Eastern European states covered a lot of ground between 1964 and 1966. The Greek–Bulgarian rapprochement was the most successful of all the attempts to built bridges. On June 28, 1964, 12 Greek–Bulgarian agreements settled most pending issues between the two. The Bulgarian state agreed to pay \$7 million as war-time reparations. In September of that year, during an official visit of foreign minister Stavros Kostopoulos, the Bulgarian government declared that its country had no claims on Greek territory.

No breakthrough was achieved with the Soviet Union because of Moscow's insistence that Greece left NATO and recognized the KKE. Relations with Yugoslavia were inversely proportional to Tito's relations with the USSR. Whenever Moscow improved relations with Yugoslavia, questions of "Macedonian minorities" in Greece would reappear, and Romania became a friendly Communist state. In September 1966, Romanian prime minister Gheorghe Maurer visited Athens.<sup>19</sup>

The clash between king and prime minister was the second in twentieth-century Greek history. The control of the armed forces was a vital issue on both occasions, 1916 and 1965. American emissaries who tried

to forestall a conflict that could divide and injure the officer corps and the chain of command discovered that their ambiguous stance in Cyprus had deprived them of their credibility vis-à-vis Papandreou.

The July events that led to the popular prime minister's resignation were accompanied by massive demonstrations, strikes, and riots giving conservatives a painful sense of *déjà vu* with reference to the turbulent forties. Soon after Papandreou's resignation, George Athanasiadis-Novas, president of Parliament, was given a mandate to form a government but failed dismally to muster support from the Center Union. Then the king, who tried to avoid elections that would give Papandreou a renewed mandate, made another abortive attempt to form a government under left-winger Elias Tsirimokos. Finally on September 24, 1965, Stephanos Stephanopoulos and 45 dissidents, supported by ERE and Markezinis, won a vote of confidence by 152 to 148. Given the adverse circumstances under which he assumed office, Stephanopoulos's survival until December 1966 was surprising. Papandreou chose to confront the new government and EDA became his unwelcome partner in most displays of anti-royalist sentiment. Andreas made his name by taking an active role in the demonstrations against the "apostates" (as they were labeled by Papandreou stalwarts). His main foe, Constantine Mitsotakis, emerged, after Sophocles Venizelos's death in 1964, as the representative of the liberal tradition in the center, and later the *de facto* leader of the "apostates."

Despite Andreas Papandreou's allegations that the partition of the Center Union was the joint project of the right wing and the Americans,<sup>20</sup> his father and the ERE leader Kanellopoulos agreed by the end of 1966 to go to elections without placing the monarchy as an issue on the campaign platforms. Kanellopoulos therefore withdrew his support of the Stephanopoulos government and on December 23 a caretaker cabinet under banker Ioannis Pappaskevopoulos came to the fore with a mandate to bring the country to elections in May 1967. However, late in March 1967 Andreas became an obstacle between his father and a solution to stir the country to orderly elections. After the trial of officers accused of having taken part in the "Aspida" conspiracy, the public prosecutor requested that the parliamentary immunity of Andreas should be lifted. George Papandreou tabled an amendment to the electoral law that extended his son's immunity to cover the period between the dissolution of Parliament and the elections.

The period between 1963 and 1967 could have purged Greek politics and society of the remnants of the civil-war heritage. The electoral

transition from the Conservatives to the Liberals, under the leadership of a person who had acted in December 1944 as a buffer to a Communist take-over, constituted a guarantee of democratic normality. A right-wing establishment in the security forces, the palace, and certain military factions became the mentors of an inexperienced monarch. Along with radicals of the opposition who tried to make political capital out of a confrontation with the establishment, they managed to construct the virtual reality of an impending civil clash.

Kanellopoulos's role as head of the Conservative Party throughout a period of induced radicalism was thankless. A moderate intellectual, he realized that it was only the extreme right and misguided radicals of the Left that would profit from acts of intransigence before the 1967 elections. In his letter of mid-March to Constantine Karamanlis in Paris, he castigated the extremists "of our camp" for fueling a climate of uncertainty that would cancel a return to normality.<sup>21</sup> Naturally the promises of Andreas Papandreu that a defiant people would face the tanks in the streets proved hollow.

On March 30 Paraskevoudoulos resigned and the king called Papandreu to form a government; following his refusal he gave Kanellopoulos the mandate. During the early hours of April 21 the Colonels moved their tanks into central Athens. The Greeks woke up in a dictatorship.<sup>22</sup>

## The Military in Power

The 1967 coup was to a large extent the reaction of "praetorian" officers against the impact of detente at home. Refusing to accept the end of the civil-war polarization and give up their role as guardians of a repressive state ideology, the officers invented a threat to internal order – a possible Communist uprising – to justify their armed intervention. The takeover succeeded in preventing George Papandreu from winning the upcoming elections. Moreover, it freed a certain military clique from the restraints by a conservative political force which had failed to remain in power. Many of these officers, in fact, supported the coup knowing that their chances for promotion would increase given the numerous dismissals that would inevitably follow.

The Colonels came to power with no clear policies, no coherent ideology of their own, and no consistent views on the shape of the regime or

the nature of its future options. Having first secured his own personal rule, the leader, George Papadopoulos, did embark on a more ambitious programme – that of rejuvenating Greece. His plan provided for no less than a total purge of the decadent Western influences which he saw as responsible for the spread of anarchy in Greek society and as threatening the very foundations of “Hellenic-Christian civilization.” In the dictator’s improvised Utopia, social classes would be abolished and general consensus on vital issues would be arrived at through systematic training in whatever was deemed expedient for the nation. But the realization of this nebulous scheme, under the supervision of the military, was soon found to need more time than had been foreseen, so that promises of a speedy return to parliamentary politics were postponed indefinitely.

The pretensions of the junta were initially limited to setting society in order rather than coping with the complex problems of development. Such terms as “growth” and “development” began to feature in their discourse, as part of an effort to modernize the image of the military. The new posture was also encouraged by a timely proliferation of published works on military sociology, which argued that the organizational strength and monopoly of force wielded by the officer corps qualified it for resolving problems of development. These ideas were adopted by a small circle of advisers to the junta, and provided a theoretical mantle for Papadopoulos’s budding aspirations.<sup>23</sup> Having patronized works which emphasized the role of officers as modernizers, the dictator was in turn convinced by his own rationalizations and propaganda that his was the task not merely of policing the state but of modernizing it.<sup>24</sup> However, the reality of military rule in Greece was close to the role ascribed by Huntington to the “guardian” soldier,<sup>25</sup> while Stepan’s refutation of theories that viewed the military as agents of development in Brazil could equally be applied to the polity of the Greek Colonels: “The Brazilian experience indicates that . . . the pattern of civil–military relations which the military attempted to impose after 1964 has left the officers internally divided, increasingly isolated from civilians, reliant upon torture as a mechanism of political control, and without a creative program of social development.”<sup>26</sup>

Not long after the coup the self-exiled Karamanlis denounced the regime as “tyrannical,” calling on the army itself to remove it, while his later intervention in April 1973 was an unequivocal demand for the military to quit government altogether. Much of the old middle class

remained implacably hostile to military rule right to the end and the extensive purge of unreliable elements within the civil service, their replacement by soldiers and their kin, and the introduction into each ministry of a military “watchdog” all led to increasing friction between officers and the civilians.

From the outset the real and effective base of the junta was in the army, whose cadres made disproportionate gains both socially and materially from the 1967 coup and could be said in that sense to constitute a new and privileged establishment. Officers not forcibly retired benefited from higher salaries, loans for cars and houses, improved promotion prospects, and discounts in shops. Meanwhile the purge of senior officers, which soon extended downward, offered accelerated promotion to those at the bottom of the hierarchy, while with the military in government there were ample opportunities for patronage. In time, however, rapid promotion would bring new blockages and frustrations, compounded by the declining reputation of the military and mounting criticism of its administration. Even within the army, the regime betrayed its origins in the factional struggles of the previous decade, as the more dependable units, commanded by those close to the junta, were favored with arms and other equipment and came increasingly to be deployed in the Athens region. The navy and air force, traditionally the “aristocracy” of the services, had no part in the 1967 coup and played no very significant role in the ensuing government, and naval officers were implicated in an unsuccessful coup discovered in May 1973.

The purge in the armed forces and the civil service of enemies of the regime and those suspected or accused of left-wing sympathies gave ample opportunities for the regime’s political pay-offs. In the autumn of 1967 King Constantine was presented with a list of officers – originally estimated at some 400 but later said to have been reduced to 144 – earmarked for early retirement. Since most of them were friends of the Crown, Constantine, who had failed to make a stand against the Colonels in April 1967, was belatedly faced with the dilemma of either playing his hand against the junta or losing what influence he still had within the army. The Colonels’ inept handling of a crisis in Cyprus not only threatened the island with a Turkish invasion that year, but also provided the king with an excellent opportunity for stepping in to oust the junta. As it turned out, it was he who had to abandon his office and flee the country.

The king's abortive coup proved that his loyal senior officers, though professionally the more competent, were no match for the Colonels in conspiratorial skills. After his flight to Italy, the officer corps was purged of all royalist elements to an extent that adversely affected the operational capabilities of the armed forces. Between 1967 and 1968 one-sixth were cashiered or retired.<sup>27</sup>

The constitution of 1968 bears witness to Papadopoulos's idea of the political regime best suited for Greece. A committee of jurists who toiled between May and December 1967 presented the government with a draft constitution which the regime ultimately ignored. Instead the officers produced their own draft between March and August 1968, and had it ratified by plebiscite in a country still under a state of emergency. The new constitution approved by 92 percent of the voters provided a picture of the mentality of those in power. Civil rights were excluded from the document, and the emasculated legislature that emerged from it had no say on issues of defense and foreign policy. The prime minister, who was the only member of the government to have a seat in Parliament, was accountable to the king in this "crowned democracy," but the king was deprived of his former ties with the armed forces. These new constitutional elements were invented to secure the exercise of fundamental powers by the military: the Constitutional Court and the provisions which vested the armed forces with extraordinary authority. Much of the authority of the defense minister was transferred to the leadership of the armed forces, and promotions, retirements, and commissions became the exclusive preserve of the military. Furthermore, there was explicit reference in the document to the army's right to safeguard the integrity of the existing political and social order. Politically motivated strikes were outlawed.<sup>28</sup>

Provision was made for a Parliament which would be elected by universal and secret ballot, and divided into two sections. "Most of the key articles of the constitution, however, were to remain inoperative indefinitely."<sup>29</sup> All the same, Papadopoulos tried to consolidate his own position, basing his authority increasingly on the constitution and at the same time trying to ease the army out of the government. He presented the regime not as a dictatorship but as a "parenthesis" that was "necessary to put things straight." The Revolutionary Committee that had acted as the conscience of the regime and met regularly during the first year seems to have been disbanded once the constitution was approved. By May 1970 Papadopoulos had emerged as the undisputed leader of the junta.

Among the favorite subjects of the pious officers were relations between church and state. Their intention was to put a tighter grip on the hierarchy and the wayward clergy. They forcibly retired the 87-year-old Archbishop Chrysostomos and summoned a "Specially Chosen Synod" of sympathetic bishops, to elect the new archbishop. Ieronymos Kotsonis, palace chaplain and professor of canon law, was an able activist who sought to improve religious education and centralize the authority of his office and the "Resident Holy Synod" of bishops attached to him. The new Church Constitution of 1969 called for the bishops of Greece to meet at a Hierarchical Synod twice a year under the presidency of the archbishop but limitations were placed on the competency of the Synod. The most vociferous criticism against Ieronymos's plans came from the conservative eccentric bishop of Florina, Augoustinos. The latter, and Ambrosios of Elevationopolis, filled charges with Greece's high court, the Council of State, insisting that the Synodal elections violated the provisions of the Tomos of 1850 and the Patriarchal Decree of 1928. The decree stated that the dioceses within the Greek state still under the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch should be represented equally on the "Resident Holy Synod." The Patriarch Dimitrios of Constantinople supported the claims of the dissidents. Faced with the opposition of a majority of the hierarchy, Ieronymos handed in his resignation. With Papadopoulos's overthrow by a coup organized by his henchman, Brigadier Dimitrios Ioannides, Metropolitan Seraphim of Ioannina, became the new archbishop of Athens. Willing to accommodate his superiors, be they dictators or elected premiers, Seraphim outlasted several governments and managed to fall in line with their priorities. His main objective was to protect the financial support which the state extended to all church institutions and prevent the relaxation of state and church relations. He was on the whole successful in his pursuits.<sup>30</sup>

In 1971 the governmental structure was radically revised. The country was divided into seven administrative districts, each to be supervised by a governor with the rank of deputy minister. Far from attempting to decentralize the administration, as the government claimed, the new system in fact tightened the grip of central authority upon the periphery.<sup>31</sup> Such measures, like the 15-year development plan announced in 1972, had long-term implications for the flow of authority while indicating Papadopoulos's own plans for a protracted term in power. The decision to dig in for a more permanent stay in office presupposed a substantial investment in the means of mass repression. Thus the



budget of the Ministry of Public Order increased by about 40 percent from 1,798 million drachmas in 1966 to 2,520 million in 1968. Simultaneously, the military expanded its range of activities by assuming a greater share of internal security. The notorious military police, a ubiquitous unit under Dimitrios Ioannides, became a veritable state within a state.<sup>32</sup> By 1969 the Defense Ministry absorbed 49.8% of all government expenditure, while the budget for education fell from 15% in 1966 to 13.1% in 1969.<sup>33</sup> Greek military expenditure averaged 4.8% of GNP between 1967 and 1970, a high percentage compared with the NATO average of 3.5% for the same period.<sup>34</sup>

The deplorable state of discipline and morale among the conscripts during the Cyprus crisis of 1974 betrayed the dictatorship's neglect of the army's battle-readiness. Such neglect could have stemmed from the adoption by the Colonels of a doctrine concerning the country's defense posture which had originated in the late 1940s. According to an American National Security Report of 1949, Greece ought to have "a military establishment capable of maintaining internal security in order to avoid Communist domination," while Turkey was intended to have military capabilities "of sufficient size and effectiveness to insure [its] continued resistance to Soviet pressures."<sup>35</sup> The splinter group within the junta that engineered the attempt on the life of Archbishop Makarios, the president of Cyprus, in the summer of 1974 did not for a moment doubt that the United States would avert any Turkish reaction that might result in war with Greece.<sup>36</sup>

In May 1973 a group of naval officers loyal to the king launched their coup against Papadopoulos. The spectacular mutiny on the destroyer *Velos* indicated to the rest of Europe that the regime had failed to secure the passivity of the entire officer corps. Since the king had traditionally commanded the loyalty of the navy, the dictator accused Constantine of instigating the coup from his self-imposed exile in Rome. On June 1 he declared the king deposed and proclaimed the creation of a "presidential parliamentary republic," subject to popular approval. Papadopoulos now appeared to be completely in control, with nothing to prevent him from assuming the presidency. According to the new regime, the president would be elected by direct popular vote for an eight-year term and would have wide legislative and executive authority, with control over foreign affairs, public order, and national security matters. The plebiscite of July 1973 was held while martial law was still in force, and served a double purpose: to ratify the amendments to the 1968

constitution and to elect Papadopoulos as president of the republic. The dictator assumed the presidential office with a 78 percent “yes” vote, 3,843,000 being in favor and 1,050,000 against.

Since the plebiscite was conducted under repressive conditions, an analysis of its outcome and voting patterns can only be speculative. Unlike the previous plebiscite of 1968, however, this one provoked vociferous criticism from various quarters. Political leaders began to regroup and voice their anger after several years of muffled opposition and underground activities. Politicians of the Right, Center, and Left, who had been bitter opponents before 1967, met again in prison cells, police headquarters, and the islands to which they had been exiled. Their hatred of the junta became a point of consensus which led to a reappraisal of past errors, some modification of political passions, and an outright dismissal of the civil war legacy of polarization. Thus the ground was laid for a post-regime process of civilian renewal.

While the president alone was responsible for foreign policy, defense, and internal security, and remained the sole source of power under the constitution until a Parliament was elected, he did appear ready for the first time to delegate some of his responsibilities to the prime minister and an all-civilian government. His choice of prime minister in October 1973 fell upon Spyros Markezinis, a one-time minister for coordination under Papagos and a leader of the small Progressive Party in Parliament. Markezinis was almost alone among former politicians in having kept silent about the regime in public, while privately offering himself as a possible “bridge” between the dictatorship and some more democratic system of rule.

At the same time Papadopoulos acted to remove his remaining military colleagues from the government, in spite of their support for and participation in the coup of 1967 and their undoubtedly “revolutionary” credentials. While there was a display of disaffection from some of those involved, a far more serious threat to the government was growing discontent within the army itself, arising from a combination of corporate and other grievances. Officers were sensitive not only to the problem of promotional blockages, but also to the charges of ineptitude and corruption made against the regime, which served to discredit the military as a whole. Complaints of one-man rule and electoral manipulation were coupled with acute resentment among some senior officers of the president’s recent overtures to old-time politicians to participate in the parliamentary elections promised before the end of

1974. Not only had the regime lost contact with its original ideals, but it was becoming increasingly divorced from its military constituency, which was also its only political base.

Nor were the party leaders in a mood to cooperate with the government, or convinced that the “half-democracy” offered by the president was better than none. Their threat to boycott elections in 1974 was, in the circumstances, as serious a challenge to the president as the hard line being taken by an important section of the army. Moreover, one result of the attempt to “unfreeze” the authoritarian regime was an increase in the level of criticism that managed to find its way to the public, leading in turn to a revolt of university students – that most sensitive barometer of political change. The re-imposition of martial law and the brutal suppression of the Athens Polytechnic uprising in November 1973 popularized the cause of the students across the nation. On November 25 a bloodless coup led by Ioannides overthrew Papadopoulos on the grounds that he had adulterated the principles of April 21, 1967. General Phaedon Gizikis was installed as president, and a civilian puppet government was set up. While some of the newly promoted commanders may earlier have favored the return of Karamanlis from self-imposed exile as the best remaining option for the military, that does not seem to have been the view of Ioannides, who wanted no truck with the former politicians. The more puritanical faction of the junta not only attempted to put the lid on the boiling cauldron of internal dissent, but also blundered into a disastrous course in its foreign policy.

The attempted assassination of President Makarios of Cyprus at the behest of Ioannides on July 28, 1974, precipitated the Turkish invasion of the island and the collapse of the military regime in Greece. The move against Makarios had been intended, at least partly, to improve the prestige of the regime and to restore the reputation of the military in Greece itself. However, the Turkish reaction meant that the junta had either to declare war and risk the consequences, or back down and face public humiliation. Unable or unwilling to choose the former, it preferred to stand down in favor of the politicians. Faced with an ultimatum by the 3rd Army Corps in northern Greece, and by the hostility of troops caught up in a chaotic general mobilization, the junta transferred its authority to the very political leaders against whom it had risen in 1967 – and faded quickly into the background.

The dictatorship of April 21, 1967, shares with other military regimes certain features that invite generalization. As often occurs with actual

regimes, the Greek experience is a mixture derived from specific conditions, which fails to conform entirely with the requirements of any ideal type. While in the past the Greek military had always been subordinate to civilian governments, the 1967–74 regime most closely resembles the “veto” type.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, it lacked the degree of military unity usually associated with this type, and from its origins as a factional coup directed against royalist senior officers as well as against democratic politicians, it degenerated in many respects to the level of a factional regime. The Revolutionary Council of 12 colonels that launched the coup was eventually superseded by George Papadopoulos’s personalized rule and his aspiration to achieve the crowning glory of civilian legitimacy. The effort by Papadopoulos to transfer limited authority to a government of makeshift politicians provoked the wrath of Ioannides, the strongman of the military police, who sought to prevent the “Revolution” from straying into political corruption. The regime thus possessed neither the military unity nor the civilian clientele necessary for the transformation into authoritarian clientelism.

Although the military regime sought to elevate the officer corps to the position of guarantor of social order, members of the junta basically aspired to acquire the legitimacy that was inseparable from civilian authority. The protagonists of military intervention therefore tried to shed their corporate identity and assume the more respected civilian garb, thus confirming the fragility of their professional self-image. It is this absence of a strong corporate identity which, more than anything else, differentiated the Greek military from their colleagues in some emerging states.<sup>38</sup> The vital task of modernization – a major source of pride for the military in certain developing societies – was not one for which the Greek military were well suited. Greek officers have more often been identified with political turmoil than with orderly change and social innovation, while their declining position in the social order generated a sense of isolation which before 1967 contributed to their hostility toward the ruling political elite, and reinforced their desire for social acceptance.<sup>39</sup>

## The Arts

The war of independence initially inspired post-revolutionary artists, but as the memories of military valor faded, warriors as subject matter gave way to rustic scenes of pretty peasant girls and robust young men.

Of nineteenth-century movements it was German Symbolism rather than French Modernism that found some adherents in Athens. Professor Nikolaos Ghyzis (1842–1901) was the most prominent and Constantinos Parthenis (1878–1967) the most innovative. The Greek artistic diaspora discovered the Parisian *avant-garde*, with some delay. Impressionism, with few exceptions, had little influence, but post-Impressionism produced artists such as Constantinos Maleas (1879–1928), Spyros Papaloukas (1893–1957), and later Nicos Hatzikyriakos Ghikas (1906–94), Yannis Moralis (1916– ), and Yannis Tsarouchis (1910–89). A parallel revival of the post-Byzantine tradition was generated by Photis Kondoglou (1896–1965), a refugee who came to Greece from Turkey with the exchange of populations in 1922–3. Kondoglou rejected the Western mode and taught his students to seek out what had roots in the Byzantine tradition.

Since the 1960s, art has submitted to a cosmopolitan influence and has ceased to explore the elusive “Greekness” that preoccupied Parthenis, Tsarouchis, and Moralis.

In 1830 the Greek musical tradition was based on folk songs, strongly influenced by ecclesiastical music and the Italianesque School of the Ionian Islands. Church chanting was originally monophonic but was gradually influenced by western polyphony. The new Greek state attracted Greeks of the diaspora who established music schools and bands, imported pianos, and invited mostly Italian performers. By the interwar period Greece had acquired a significant infrastructure of musical education that produced such important performers as conductor Dimitris Mitropoulos (1896–1960) and soprano, Maria Callas (Kalogeropoulou) (1923–77). Nicos Skalkotas (1904–49), a modernist composer who died in his prime, made brilliant use of demotic tunes and Yannis Christou (1926–70) worked on musical backgrounds for Greek drama before he met an early death. Ianni Xenaki (1921–2000) won international acclaim for his mathematically patterned compositions. It was in popular music however that the Greeks did best. Manos Hatzidakis, Mikis Theodorakis, Stavros Xarchakos, Dionysis Savvopoulos, and many others, crossed the borders of Greece with their music.

George Seferis (Seferiades) (1900–71) and Odysseas Elytis (Alepuodelis) (1911–96) became the two Nobel laureates of Greece in 1963 and 1979 respectively. No two personalities could have been more different, yet the sum total of their poetics encapsulates the Greek experience almost in its entirety.

Although a diplomat, Seferis was an introvert who fed upon the trauma of loss. His family's flight from their Asia Minor homeland contributed to his reserved and somber character, but his quiet pessimism preaches forbearance rather than capitulation. The economy of his language and lyricism refers to the high achievement of his ancient tutors. No other poetic work in Modern Greek is closer to the economy of ancient verse. Seferis acknowledges Greece's fall from grace with a wistful reminiscence of a past private happiness.

We moored on shores full of night-scents,  
 The birds singing, with waters that left on the hands  
 The memory of a great happiness.  
 But the voyages did not end.  
 Their souls became one with the oars and the oarlocks  
 With the solemn face of the prow  
 With the rudder's wake  
 With the water that shattered their image.  
 The companions died one by one,  
 With lowered eyes. Their oars  
 Mark the place where they sleep on the shore.  
 No one remembers them. Justice

"Mythistorema," trans. by E. Keeley and Philip Sherrard

Elytis matured in the 1930s but was never touched by the interwar *mal du siècle*. He served on the Albanian front in 1940 and produced a masterpiece, "The Heroic and Mournful Song for the Lieutenant Killed in Albania," which constitutes an exaltation of youth, love, and the sun. These three elements will remain in the core of his Apollonian poetry throughout his life. Whereas Seferis is the old wise man of Greek poetry, Elytis is its eternal youth. He glorifies the splendor of the moment and the feast of the senses.

PRAISED BE the light and man's  
 First rock-carved prayer  
 The vigor in the beast leading the sun  
 The plant that warbled so the day rose  
  
 The land that dives and rears its back  
 A stone horse the sea rides  
 The myriad tiny blue voices  
 The great white head of Poseidon.

"Axion esti," trans. by E. Keeley and G. Savvidis

In Elytis's own Aegean creation, wounds are healed as quickly as those of sea creatures and are soon forgotten. Both poets became better known to a larger audience when their verse was put to music by composer Mikis Theodorakis.

The end of the interwar period witnessed a prodigious bloom in Greek poetry that continued into the sixties. Besides the two Nobel laureates, there was Andreas Embirikos (1901–75) who introduced surrealism to Greece with Nicos Engonopoulos (1910–85) as a major disciple. Miltos Sachtouris appeared shortly after.

## RETURN TO DEMOCRACY (1974–2009)

In the summer 1974 after the junta overthrew Makarios, Turkey invaded Cyprus and the Greek military regime disintegrated. On July 23, 1974, members of the junta handed over power to politicians who summoned Constantine Karamanlis from Paris to assume the leadership of a civilian government. This surrender of power, without a struggle that would perhaps have cleared the field of the legacy of the past, had its negative aspects. Although the transfer was unconditional, the new democratic regime initially operated within a state apparatus totally controlled by junta appointees. Besides having to deal with matters of the utmost urgency in the field of foreign affairs, Karamanlis was also faced with the task of gradually replacing higher officials with men of his own choice. His government was often criticized for not having stepped up the process of “de-juntification” and when his provisional cabinet fixed the election date for November 17, 1974, the opposition claimed that state agencies and local authorities infested by junta agents would influence the electoral results. Although such criticisms were not altogether unfounded, the elections were conducted in an exemplary manner. The system of “reinforced” proportional representation which had determined most of the postwar elections in Greece was put to use once more. The outcome – a triumph for Karamanlis and his newly formed New Democracy Party which obtained 54 percent of the vote and 220 seats in Parliament – signified to a large extent an endorsement of his efforts to secure an orderly change of guard without provoking the stunned but still dangerous forces of reaction. The Center Union–New Forces Party received 20.4 percent of the vote and 60 seats.

Although there has never been much difference in the social and professional backgrounds of Liberal and Conservative deputies – in both parliamentary groups lawyers have predominated – the Liberals who



were elected in 1936 came largely from the urban centers, territories unified with Greece after 1912, and refugee communities after 1922. In the parliament of 1964, the territorial representation of the two major parties was more uniform, with deputies from urban centers, the “new” territories, and the refugee communities evenly distributed between right and center. Lawyers were again numerically dominant, with workers and farmers conspicuously absent on both sides of the House. Of the 107 right-wing coalition representatives elected in 1964, as many as 20 percent had begun their political careers in the Liberal camp, while only two of Conservative origin joined the ranks of the Center Union. In 1974, the center supplied New Democracy and the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) with several of its former adherents. EDIK’s (the Union of Democratic Center) claim, therefore, that the Liberal camp was constantly renewing the ranks of other major parties was not without foundation. The outcome of the referendum to decide the future of the monarchy in Greece was perhaps more in keeping with the public mood for change. Although Karamanlis maintained a neutral stance vis-à-vis the issue in question, his silence was widely interpreted as a condemnation of the institution, which had destabilized Greek politics on several crucial occasions. The referendum of December 1974, which was the sixth to be held on the issue of the Crown in the twentieth century (1920, 1924, 1935, 1946, 1973), sealed the fate of the monarchy with 69 percent of the votes cast against the institution.

The drafting of a new constitution incorporating changes that had emerged since the return to democracy, as well as the reformist visions of the prime minister, began in earnest after the referendum. With more than a two-thirds majority, Karamanlis introduced a draft constitution for discussion in Parliament at the end of December 1974 that provided for a strong presidential executive after the Gaullist model and was heavily criticized by those who were against any curtailment of the powers of Parliament.

The constitution of 1975 replaced that of 1952 (which had been put into temporary force in the summer of 1974) and was the outcome of a compromise between Karamanlis’s bid for a presidential regime and those who upheld the prerogatives of Parliament. Among other changes it set out the legal framework of church–state relations. It removed the requirement that the president be Orthodox and swear to protect the Orthodox creed. The clause forbidding proselytism was moved from Article 3 to Article 13 on human rights “prohibiting proselytism against

any faith.”<sup>1</sup> Article 3 recognizes “Orthodoxy” as the prevailing faith,” and 13 guarantees religious freedoms of conscience and worship.<sup>2</sup> The salaries and pensions of the Orthodox clergy of Greece are provided by the state.

The new constitution strengthened the role of the executive over that of the legislative assembly and endowed the president of the republic with powers that some other parliamentary republics did not possess. Under it, the president is elected by Parliament for a five-year term and has the power to declare war and conclude treaties. He was also given the right to veto legislation, although a three-fifths majority in Parliament could override his veto. The president was also empowered to dissolve Parliament if he thought it no longer reflected the popular will or had proved incapable of ensuring a stable government. Constantine Tsatsos, a well-known intellectual and a close associate of Karamanlis, became the latter’s choice for the presidency. On June 19, 1975, Tsatsos was elected by Parliament and stayed for almost his entire term in office. Karamanlis himself was elected president of the republic in 1980.

Besides political and constitutional changes, there was a marked change of intellectual climate in Greece after the fall of the junta in 1974. The preoccupation with the elusive notion of “Greekness” which had obsessed the intelligentsia of an older generation such as architects Pikiionis and Constantinides, painters Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas, Tsarouchis, and Moralis, film director Cacoyiannis, composers Hadjidakis and Theodorakis, and Nobel prize laureates Seferis and Elytis, gradually gave way to a more cosmopolitan influence. A new generation of artists, novelists, composers, and film directors (Takis, Tsoklis, Kounelis, Ioannou, Savopoulos, Xenakis, Angelopoulos, and Voyadzis to mention but a few) embraced much more decisively Western forms of expression.

Social and political emancipation became significant concerns of the 1970s, once the old specter of the civil war had faded and the incubus of the junta removed, and the rising expectations of the Greek public that had been stifled by the military regime on the political front surfaced with increased vigor. While Karamanlis’s triumph during the first post-junta elections signified the people’s will to see democracy consolidated, the demand for change gained momentum during the subsequent elections of 1977 in which New Democracy saw its share of the popular vote fall to 41.8% and its parliamentary seats reduced by 43. During those elections the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) under Andreas Papandreou secured 25.3% of the vote, soaring from

12 to 93 seats in Parliament and pushing the Center Union, from which it had broken off, to third place with 11.9% of the vote. A welcome development was the fact that the unprecedented political freedoms enjoyed by the Greeks since 1974 relieved party politics from the rancor and fanaticism of the pre-junta years.

The most serious challenges facing Karamanlis during the post-junta years had to do with Greece's foreign policy problems. The restoration of democracy in Greece was largely due to a dramatic external event. One day after the second Turkish offensive in Cyprus, Greece withdrew from the military structure of NATO in protest against the Alliance's failure to prevent the invasion. Another serious development was Turkish claims over a portion of the Aegean territorial waters, seabed, and airspace, extending well to the west of the major east Aegean Islands. According to Greek evaluations, Turkish diplomacy skilfully diverted international attention from the maintenance of its forces on Cyprus to a "composite of directly and indirectly related and mutually reinforcing issues" in the Aegean. Given the great number of populated Greek islands in the Aegean a broad consensus was thus formed among Greeks of all political tendencies that the immediate security threat to Greece came from Turkey. Statements by Turkish high officials confirmed public fears. The Turkish prime minister stated on July 30, 1974, that "the defence of the Aegean islands should be jointly undertaken by Greece and Turkey as allies within NATO."<sup>3</sup>

The Karamanlis government took measures to secure the fortification of the east Aegean Islands. Greece's withdrawal from NATO's military structure was more of a trial separation than a divorce as the country remained in the political arm of the alliance. Karamanlis repeatedly rejected the non-alignment option and after the normalization of the internal situation, expressed his willingness to re-enter the military structure of NATO. Greek reintegration attempts were vetoed by Turkey which, having raised a claim over the reallocation of the Athens FIR was, in effect, also demanding a reallocation of the operational control zones of the Aegean airspace. According to pre-1974 arrangements, NATO had ceded the military responsibility over Aegean airspace (Greek and international) as well as the Aegean Sea (Greek and international sea-waters) to Greek command. Any other arrangement would result in a situation where Greek territories (east Aegean Islands) would be placed under Turkish protection. A division of the operational control of the Aegean would make coordination in times of war in such

a restricted area difficult to achieve without violating national airspace or sea-waters. This would be against a basic Military Committee principle (36/2) which provides that “countries retain their sovereignty and are, therefore, ultimately responsible for the defense and security of their own territories and space.” Negotiations of the country’s re-entry proved long and arduous. Three reintegration plans with settlement proposals by the Supreme Commander Allied Forces Europe (SACEUR) General Haig and a fourth one by his successor General Rogers were rejected. A solution was finally accepted in October 1980, with a provision allowing the reallocation question to be settled later within the alliance.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout his post junta years as prime minister, Karamanlis transformed himself into a liberal politician and emancipated his political camp from its unqualified support of the United States and NATO. It took a disaster of the Cypriot magnitude to release the anger of the Greek Conservatives (both in Greece and the United States) against their traditional loyalties. Karamanlis however managed to temper such reactions into a constructive criticism of Western insouciance that proved effective both through the American embargo of February 1975 on weapons to Turkey and the plethora of UN resolutions over Cyprus.

Greece’s role as an interlocutor among Balkan states suspicious of each other’s motives profited greatly from the July 1975 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) and the Helsinki Final Act. Although the spirit of Helsinki ultimately contributed to the erosion of authoritarian regimes in Eastern Europe, in 1975 it still appeared that the Communist status quo had been secured in exchange for “unenforceable promises on human rights.”<sup>5</sup> In Helsinki, Karamanlis secured the agreement of Romania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia for an inter-Balkan meeting at the level of deputy ministers of coordination and planning.<sup>6</sup> Of the three, Romania was traditionally the most positive toward political multilateralism and Bulgaria the least.

Karamanlis’s 1979 visit to Moscow was well-timed for a significant Greek–Soviet rapprochement and the approval of a follow-up on Balkan multilateralism. After securing Bulgarian agreement, Karamanlis proposed to the other Balkan leaders a conference of experts on telecommunication and transportation which took place in Ankara on November 26–29, 1979. The outcome of the second conference on inter-Balkan cooperation made it clear that political questions could not be dealt

with in a southeastern Europe divided into blocs. Karamanlis nevertheless was not discouraged from approaching political cooperation indirectly, through confidence building in non-political fields.

### **The Road to the European Community**

In May 1973, while still in Paris, Karamanlis had referred to Greece's European orientation as the country's new "Great Idea." Full membership in the European Community, achieved in May 1979 after tortuous negotiations, was the hallmark of his dogged pursuit of an "organic Greek presence in the West." Yet the domestic debate on the merits and liabilities of membership that took place during the period 1975–81 focused on the ideological and even security aspects of being part of the European Community. In order to promote the nation's new "Great Idea" of entering the EU as a full member, Karamanlis had to deal with the nation's economy first. The junta's legacy was a 26.4 percent rate of inflation, an ever-widening balance of payments deficit, and a slump in economic activity. Adopting a mildly expansionary policy, the Government of National Unity proceeded to adopt a series of economic measures that would bring about the immediate relief needed to keep the social peace during the difficult transition to democratic rule. These measures included an upward readjustment of minimum wages, an increase in the basic salaries of civil servants, a contribution tax on higher incomes, a reduction of credit controls by stages beginning with the immediate lifting of controls on financing productive investment and exports, an overhaul of the whole public investment program, and, most important of all, rapid moves to re-establish the frozen relations with the EEC. By the end of 1975 most of the indicators had moved in a favorable direction. Karamanlis, however, kept warning both employers and workers of fresh dangers: the rising price of oil, the burden of defense, and – he added as the unions were flexing their muscles – the impact of unreasonable demands. He seemed to have got his way because the annual review of the Greek economy published in May 1976 by the governor of the Bank of Greece, Xenophon Zolotas, described economic developments in 1975 as generally satisfactory. GDP at constant prices, Zolotas said, had risen by 3.3% as opposed to a 1.2% decrease in 1974. Pursuing this policy of cautious expansion and balancing growth with fiscal discipline proved reasonably successful as the years went by.

The overall performance of the economy in the year 1976 showed steady, if not spectacular, progress. Prices increased by 12%, while the previous year's inflation had reached 15.2%. GDP rose by 5% as against 4.5% in 1975. Investment also rose by a total of 7.5% mainly because of activity in the public sector and the construction industry. On January 13, 1977, the minister of finance, Evangelos Devletoglou, made it clear that wages would be kept under strict control.

Karamanlis decided that Greece should apply directly for membership of the EEC as a democratic European country and not as an associate member since 1962. After careful preparation of the various dossiers, Greece submitted her application for full membership of the European Economic Community, the European Coal and Steel Community, and EURATOM on June 12, 1975. The council's chairman, Dr Fitzgerald, who arrived in Athens on June 26 for discussions with Greek officials, told reporters that he expected the negotiations to be completed within two to three years. In fact it took somewhat longer. On January 31, 1976, alarm bells started ringing in Athens when it became known that the Commission was preparing an "Opinion" imposing a preparatory period of ten years before Greece could become a full member, arguing that its economy was insufficiently developed. This was odd because by then the Greek economy had just overtaken the weakest – then – EEC member, Ireland, in per capita income. Karamanlis reacted instantly and vigorously. He summoned the ambassadors of the nine in Athens and told them in no uncertain terms that the views of the Commission were "morally and politically unacceptable to Greece." The Council of Ministers were impressed. On February 9 they overruled the Commission. The next day Karamanlis expressed his satisfaction. Formal negotiations started on July 27, 1976.

Papandreou threatened that a PASOK government would withdraw from the EEC. In his fiery speeches during the pre-electoral period in November 1977 he kept repeating that Greece's membership of the EEC "will consolidate the marginal role of the country as a satellite of the capitalist system; will render national planning impossible; will seriously threaten Greek industry; and will lead to the extinction of Greek farmers." "What should be done," he insisted, was "to restructure relations with the EEC on the basis of a special agreement (of the Norwegian type) which would allow for Greece's full control over its national economy and especially the movement of capital and goods." "In any event," he said time and time again, "PASOK believes that the crucial matter of our accession to the EEC cannot be decided without a referendum."

Papandreou's attacks against Greece's accession became even more virulent when PASOK doubled its share of the vote at the November 20, 1977, elections. Karamanlis realized that time was of the essence. Although negotiations were speeded up and going well, Karamanlis thought it best to visit London, Paris, and Brussels in January 1978 to canvass for support. He did so again on March 30, going this time to Copenhagen, Luxembourg, The Hague, and Rome. On his return to Athens he said: "There is now actual certainty that in two years time Greece will be the tenth member of the EEC." On April 3, 1978, most of the outstanding issues were finally agreed upon by compromise.<sup>7</sup> On December 21, 1978, at 3.20 in the morning after 17 hours of hard, last minute bargaining, it was announced that the EEC had finally agreed to accept Greece as the tenth member of the community. The agreement provided for a five-year transitional period with three exceptions: peaches, tomatoes, and Greeks would move freely in the EEC only after seven years. The Treaty of Accession was signed in Athens on May 28, 1979, in the presence of heads of state, prime ministers, and other dignitaries. Legislation to ratify it was passed in the Greek Parliament on June 28, 1979. The opponents of Greece's entry, namely PASOK and the Communists, left the chamber so that Karamanlis found himself "debating with absentees" as he put it. There followed ratification by all the EEC parliaments and Greece became the tenth member of the community on January 1, 1981, just one year later than Karamanlis had predicted in a moment of optimism at the beginning of 1978.<sup>8</sup>

Karamanlis had reasons to be deeply satisfied, but during the first quarter of 1980 he had to make a crucial decision. As the five-year term of President Tsatsos was due to end in June he wondered whether he should try to succeed him in the post or not. To do so might make it easy for some to vote for PASOK, knowing that with Karamanlis in the presidency some of Papandreou's wildest plans – such as taking Greece out of the EEC – would be still-born. As a consequence, some within New Democracy were not too happy with their leader's decision to go for president that played in PASOK's favor, because they thought that the party could still win the next elections.

Karamanlis knew that this was just wishful thinking. He was aware of his shortcomings as a popular leader and as a public speaker. He knew that the return to normality meant that his services were no longer needed as the dilemma "Karamanlis or the tanks" had been superseded. With the tanks safely in their barracks, his main mission had

been completed and he could now retire gracefully. Knowing that Papandreou would win, Karamanlis decided to go for the presidency to save Greece's EEC membership and perhaps even contain possible damage in other fields as well.

On April 17, 1980 Karamanlis revealed to his cabinet his intention to stand for president. Parliament did elect him on May 5, 1980, in the third round of voting with 183 votes. On May 8, New Democracy elected George Rallis as their next leader and premier, and on May 15 Karamanlis took the oath as president, Tsatsos having resigned before the expiry of his full term. The general elections on October 18, 1981, resulted in a resounding victory for PASOK. In two interviews that Papandreou gave immediately after his triumph to the American TV network ABC and to the BBC TV's *Panorama* program, he said that his government would ask the president of the republic, Karamanlis, to call a referendum on Greece's accession to the EEC. Should this be refused, Papandreou said – knowing full well that it would – Greece's new government would defend the country's interests from within the community. He pointed out that one should not confuse ideology with practical politics. This was new language for the leader of PASOK.

As perceptions changed, as peace became associated with a normal state of affairs rather than with the interval between wars, as democracy became a way of life rather than an often frustrated aspiration, as dissent even on the so-called "national issues" became legitimate, as the economy improved and the Greeks felt safer within their borders than they had ever felt before, so Western perceptions of Greece started changing too. From being taken for granted during the Cold War as a bulwark against Communism, Greece moved toward being gradually accepted as a normal country with a voice of her own, in fact an ally. From a protected nation if not quite a protectorate, Greece became a partner of Western nations. On paper, this meant the triumph of the "western" model of nation-building. In practice, the triumph was yet incomplete because those fighting against the country's "Europeanization" though severely beaten had not disappeared altogether.

## The PASOK Victory

The elections of October 18, 1981, gave a Socialist party an absolute majority of seats in Parliament for the first time in Greek history. PASOK,



under the leadership of Andreas Papandreou, gained 48.07 percent of the votes and 172 seats in Parliament. New Democracy became the opposition with 35.8 percent of the votes and 118 seats. Andreas Papandreou, with his call for “change,” appealed to an electorate disenchanted with the policies of financial discipline, increased competitiveness, and emphasis on hard work of previous governments.

After the celebrations for the triumph of “change” (*Allaghi*) that was the Greek Socialists’ main slogan, the new premier’s statements indicated that Greece would remain Socialist for good. The “Right” was exorcised as an evil force that had stalked the land for decades and should never be allowed to do this again, while anti-American rhetoric became official policy. Papandreou, an American citizen and a professor at an American university, married to an American woman, was freed from the clutches of the junta by US President Johnson who reputedly told the Greek ambassador in Washington to convey to Papadopoulos – the head of the junta – his wish to release Papandreou in the following terms: “Tell Papa-what’s-his-name to release the other Papa-what’s-his-name immediately.”

Papandreou hit on a brilliant formula when he said that PASOK would be the “movement for the non-privileged.” This was particularly effective, first because very few Greeks would ever classify themselves as “privileged,” and second because although it conveyed intimations of class war, it allowed practically everybody to join the party. In fact, PASOK’s electoral support was equally spread amongst all social groups. Appealing to the “non-privileged” was therefore convenient because PASOK could thus draw support from all those who opposed, generally speaking, “the Right” and “the elites” but did not quite know what they wanted done in Greece. The logical impossibility for any political formation to make everybody equally “privileged” was of no consequence to him or to them. What PASOK did was to develop a populist mode of rallying the masses of the disenchanted around a suitably vague project of “change.”

As it moved up in the world, modern Greece has been mostly governed by western-oriented elites that drew their inspiration more from the values of the Enlightenment, emphasizing individual effort and favoring the competitiveness inherent in the function of free markets and less from the notion of a paternalistic state extending protection over those feeling “non-privileged” and resenting it. The two cultures, the segmented and the European-oriented modernist one, often

coexisted, however uneasily, in the traditional Greek parties affecting economic policy. Andreas tried to build his electoral base exclusively on the segmentary culture and scored an impressive electoral success. The egalitarianism he proclaimed and the model for the unmediated exercise of power through his own charismatic leadership appealed strongly to all those who were seeking compensation for past sufferings and wanted to settle “old scores here and now.”

Of crucial importance for the modernizing culture was the accession to the European Community that Karamanlis saw as a bulwark against Greece’s slippage back into a culture of isolationism. The paradox was that this most important event in Greece’s history as a nation-state happened just when the political expression of the triumphant underdog culture came to power in Greece. The way Andreas managed to escape from the horns of this dilemma by manipulating his followers into finally agreeing to stay in the EEC is worth looking into in some detail.<sup>9</sup>

The former vehemence of PASOK’s denunciation of the EEC as a danger to Greece’s sovereignty and the depiction of Brussels as the center of a sinister power structure that would crush all the small European countries made it politically very difficult for Andreas to sell an open volte-face to his rank and file. So to defuse the situation another procedural formula was devised. A government memorandum was submitted to the Commission in March 1982 with a list of demands which, if accepted, would make accession palatable to PASOK as a whole. Some spoke of a “Wilsonian re-negotiation” in all but name but this was wrong. Wisely, PASOK shunned the term “re-negotiation” that risked entangling Greece in the negotiations procedure with the Iberian countries then under way. In fact the memorandum was an innocuous wish-list of various measures of support, pleading special treatment because of Greece’s “peculiarities” and “structural malformations.”

The memorandum gave PASOK ample room for maneuver, allowing it to adopt a “wait and see” attitude. The Commission, fully aware of the game that was being played, took its time to respond. When it did so, in March 1983, it rejected the case for special treatment but by then it was too late for Greece to opt out of the Community even if she wanted to – which she didn’t. As a sop, however, Greece was promised special funding in the context of the “Integrated Mediterranean Programs” to be set up. This was an important concession that Papandreou had won and he lost no time in declaring victory. From

then on, he stopped any mention of “Greek peculiarities” and emphasized the need for redistribution of resources within the community, a demand that had such a familiar Socialist ring to it as to make it almost pleasing to his supporters in Greece.

Never again did Andreas mention leaving the Community: he only tried to wriggle out of Greece’s commitments under the Accession Treaty and enjoyed playing the awkward squad to the best of his considerable ability to do so. He thus broke ranks with his EEC partners in 1982 on the Falklands crisis and abstained during a vote condemning Argentina in the UN, even though Greece was facing similar threats in the Aegean. In September 1983, after the Soviet Union shot down a Korean civilian jet, Greece insisted that a European communiqué on the issue should not “condemn” the incident but simply “regret” it. When his views were not accepted he insisted on adding an asterisk at the end of the common text to clarify his own diverging position. Such games were popular in Greece.

With time, Greece became more and more dependent on the EEC and as funds started flowing into the country (amounting to 4.5 percent of Greece’s GDP during 1989) even PASOK had to acknowledge the inevitable. Following a Brussels summit in March 1985, Papandreu finally declared that Greece was not going to withdraw from the Community because, as he put it, “the cost of leaving would be much higher than the cost of staying.” Such a clear cost–benefit analysis was unanswerable and as such was accepted by PASOK without a murmur.

Changes from rhetorical intemperance to pragmatic reconsideration happened eventually in the domestic scene too but not before serious damage had been inflicted on the economy. In 1980, when recession started to bite on account of the oil price increase of 1979, with growth a mere 1.8 percent and profits plummeting, Greece started facing serious difficulties. These did not deter Andreas from introducing a highly redistributive economic package right away with wage indexation, easy credit, and a variety of handouts to various groups at a time when inflation was running at an excess of 20 percent and while an estimated 250 firms employing some 100,000 people were on the brink of bankruptcy. Interestingly, in 1981 Greece’s public debt was no more than 28 percent of GDP, so borrowing was relatively easy for a country that belonged to the EEC. As soon as it took power, PASOK availed itself of this facility without much restraint. In the 1980s Greece borrowed

money right, left, and center to finance consumer spending and a bloated, inefficient public sector, as well as a welfare system soon to be driven itself to the brink of bankruptcy with premiums kept artificially low while payouts became more and more generous. The public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) jumped from 8.1 percent in 1980 to 17 percent in 1985. This was not a Robin Hood Socialist policy of robbing the rich to give to the poor but a policy of burdening all with debt. What has been described as “party clientelism,” to distinguish it from the individual variety practiced until then by ministers of non-Socialist parties, resulted in an interdependence of party and the state machinery that led to a continuing expansion of the latter to satisfy the insatiable hunger of the former.

Rushing into “Socialism,” the PASOK government raised real weekly earnings in manufacturing by a hefty 7.8% in 1982. Since there was also a reduction of hours of work, the real hourly remuneration increase reached 10.3%. At the same time, output per person declined by 3%. This hit exports by making Greek goods more expensive. As always in such circumstances, the time-honored, easy – and very short-term – way out was once again chosen as the drachma was devalued by 15% in January 1983. However, far from improving competitiveness, this measure failed dismally because the government had introduced indexing for wages. Any short-term gain in competitiveness due to the fact that Greek goods were made artificially cheaper was, however, quickly eroded because the rise in import prices due to the devaluation was immediately transmitted to wages and thence to costs and prices. This led in turn to new wage rises until the vicious circle totally annihilated any gains in competitiveness due to the devaluation. Within 18 months, the Greek economy was back to square one. This prompted Papandreu to warn his compatriots that “we consume more than we produce.” He did not specify who this “we” referred to.

Firms managed to survive by keeping investment at a minimum and profits low. Others continued borrowing from state banks until they faced bankruptcy, at which point the state-owned Industrial Reconstruction Organization (OAE), created by PASOK, took them over and continued to run them at a loss.<sup>10</sup> As difficulties accumulated, Andreas did not change his policies but rushed forward to award himself the greatest possible room for maneuver. On March 29, 1985, PASOK declined to support Karamanlis for a second term as president of the republic and Christos Sartzetakis, a judge, was elected president by

Parliament in a constitutionally questionable procedure that was not as secret as it should have been because of the colored ballot papers used by those in favor of the Sartzetakis candidacy. The new president duly authorized elections to be held on June 2, 1985. Papandreou's slogan was to promise "even better days" if PASOK was re-elected. His second-in-command, Agamemnon Koutsogiorgas, explained that what was at issue during these elections was not "oranges and tomatoes but the confrontation between two worlds." Papandreou soon followed suit describing the electoral contest as the fight of light against darkness.

In a program over 200 pages long, PASOK boasted of having freed Greece from the clutches of foreign powers, pledged to resist any pressures to engage in a dialogue with Turkey, and claimed to have defended Greece's interests in the EEC by linking the question of the implementation of the "Integrated Mediterranean Programs" to that of the admission of Spain and Portugal that Greece had otherwise threatened to veto. The economic program contained promises of further socialization of the means of production, promotion of investment through agricultural cooperatives, a substantial increase of pensions, and general improvement of welfare provision. Almost as an afterthought PASOK also promised to combat inflation.

The June 1984 elections for the Greek representatives to the European Parliament gave 38.05% to New Democracy, 41.58% to PASOK, 11.64% to the Communist Party and 3.42% to the Eurocommunists. The New Democracy Party, which had faced an acute identity crisis after its founder Karamanlis opted for the presidency of the republic in 1980, changed leadership twice before the position was offered to the forceful Constantinos Mitsotakis at the end of August 1984. A one-time Center Union Party deputy who had clashed with its leader George Papandreou in 1965, Constantine Mitsotakis was faced with the double task of consolidating his leadership in New Democracy as well as dodging the attacks of PASOK deputies who sought to divert public interest from current problems to past political conflicts.

The parliamentary elections of June 1985 gave PASOK a comfortable margin (45.82% and 172 deputies) allowing it to pursue its program unhindered by leftist or rightist opposition. PASOK's wage-price indexation permitted people of low and medium income to beat the rate of inflation. Price controls and the protection of workers from lay-offs had a negative effect on business but won the support of a larger section of the population. There was therefore a clearer correlation of income level

and electoral behavior in 1985 than in 1981. Businesspeople, managers, and certain professional groups, as well as the legal and medical associations, opted for New Democracy. New Democracy, with 40.84% (126 deputies) of the vote, added 4.98% to its 1981 percentage while the Communist Party (KKE) with 9.89% of the vote (12 deputies) lost 1.4%. Finally the Eurocommunists, with 1.84% of the vote, managed to elect one deputy.<sup>11</sup>

The elections were dominated by the verbal exchanges between Papandreou and Mitsotakis but the concerns of all party platforms revolved around the economy and its uncertain future. New Democracy adopted a liberal prescription promising to decrease the role of the state and provide incentives for a revival of the private sector. Mitsotakis's constant references to the country's ever-increasing dependence on foreign loans in order to finance a cumbersome and expensive state underlined the most sensitive issue of the contest. Greece's economy, which has always been sensitive to international developments, became even more dependent on foreign capital under PASOK.

A short-lived stabilization program introduced by PASOK in October 1985 was an attempt to put things right and as such secured a \$1.75 billion loan from the EEC. The stabilization package was based on a traditional incomes policy and included a 15% devaluation of the drachma, a reduction in borrowing, and a tightening of monetary policy. As a result of this change of gear, real wages dropped sharply in 1986 and 1987 while business profitability rose for the first time in years. The Public Sector Borrowing Requirement fell to 13% of GDP in 1987 from about 18% in 1985. The current account deficit declined from 8% in 1985 to about 2% in 1987 while inflation was brought down from 20% in 1985 to 16% in 1987. However, this attempt by PASOK to moderate its economic populism did not last long. In 1987, sensing that his influence with the electorate was on the wane, Papandreou unceremoniously dismissed Professor Costas Simitis, minister of national economy and architect of this reasonably successful stabilization program. Papandreou thus gained a free hand to indulge in a more than usually extravagant spending spree to win the elections of 1989 – which he lost. During the following two-year period of weak coalition governments, the slide continued. The economy almost stopped in its tracks.<sup>12</sup>

The most significant deviation of PASOK's policy toward Turkey was introduced by the Davos meeting between the Greek and Turkish prime ministers in February 1988 that signified an easing of tensions between

the two countries. Almost a year before, a crisis caused by Turkey's decision to send a research vessel escorted by warships to explore for oil in the disputed continental shelf around Lesbos, Lemnos, and Samothrace, brought the two states close to an armed clash. The crisis was defused, but it became clear that perhaps a future confrontation could not be averted given the delicate state of relations in the Aegean. At the same time, Papandreou began to realize that repeated emergency appeals to the Greek population would eventually blunt sensitivities over Greek–Turkish disputes. Furthermore, the burden of enormous defense spending on the ailing Greek balance of payments and the long military service, which detracted from the government's populist image, convinced the Greek prime minister that he should take the initiative to raise significantly the war threshold between Greece and Turkey.

In the spring of 1988, Turkey's foreign affairs minister, Mesut Yilmaz, raised the question of the "Turkish" minority in Greek Thrace and dismissed any possibility of a Turkish military withdrawal from Cyprus before the two communities came to an agreement on a solution. The Greek side soon realized that Cyprus was not considered by the Turks as part of the Davos package while the Muslims of Thrace were being forcefully brought into the picture. Although some progress was made toward developing a set of confidence-building measures regarding accident prevention in international waters of the Aegean, the Davos spirit gradually lost momentum and quietly expired in 1989.<sup>13</sup>

During Papandreou's first term as prime minister (1981–5), Greece sought to pursue a more "independent" foreign policy. At a time when the non-aligned movement was in general decline Papandreou chose to establish ties with essentially anti-Western neutrals of northern Africa and the Middle East. When the Reagan–Gorbachev tug of war on disarmament was beginning to bear results, he joined the leaders of five other states (Mexico, Argentina, Sweden, India, and Tanzania) to promote world denuclearization and continued to press for nuclear-free zones in the Balkans. Finally, Papandreou's reluctance to join the United States and Western Europe in condemning the Soviet Union on issues such as the introduction of martial law in Poland and the downing of the KAL airliner won his government points with Moscow but created ill will in Washington, whose support was far more important for Greek security.

Greek foreign policy was prepared to reap the dividend of Communist collapse in the Balkans. Following Karamanlis's record as the Western

honest broker in the region, Papandreou pursued his own idiosyncratic multilateralism. He began his Balkan initiatives by reviving an old Romanian proposal for a regional nuclear- weapons-free-zone and gradually became an exponent of all forms of regional cooperation.<sup>14</sup>

With Mikhail Gorbachev's devolution underway, the meeting of six Balkan foreign ministers in Belgrade in February 1988, dealing with confidence- and security-building measures and minority questions, heralded a new period of inter-Balkan relations. The meeting of Balkan foreign ministers held in Tirana during January 18–20, 1989, examined guidelines to govern relations between Balkan neighbors, while the meeting of experts in Bucharest, on May 23–24, 1989, dealt with confidence- and security-building measures.<sup>15</sup>

PASOK's fall from grace was not unexpected. The 1985 elections had already contained early signs of dissatisfaction of the electorate. The party's poor performance in conjunction with allegations of corruption and favoritism caused the loss of a number of voters in Athens. When Andreas realized that his appeal was slipping he tried to boost his position by bringing about institutional changes to strengthen his grip on power. So in 1986 he changed the constitution to restrict considerably the president's powers, turning him into a ceremonial figure who could no longer dissolve parliament, dismiss the government, proclaim elections, suspend certain articles of the constitution, or declare a state of siege. Papandreou thus made sure that any future president of whatever hue would never be in a position to endanger a Socialist government, even though Karamanlis had never opposed any of Papandreou's moves and had never used the powers that he held under the 1975 constitution to create problems for the government. In fact the Greek version of "cohabitation" proved smooth enough for Papandreou to have acknowledged as much publicly, more than once.

Any extra powers that the new constitution gave Andreas proved of little use to him, however. By the late 1980s Greece had fallen behind both Portugal and Ireland in the movement toward convergence with the EEC average GDP while the IMF, the OECD, and the Commission were producing alarming reports on Greece. The economy, they all noted, seemed stuck in a vicious circle of low investment, sluggish growth, dependence on state subsidies, deficit financing by the government, high inflation, and tight credit.

The turning point in PASOK's fortunes was the illness of Papandreou and his absence from the administration of power during the summer



of 1988. Koutsogiorgas, who replaced the ailing prime minister in the actual running of the state, proved an embarrassment for PASOK. In November 1988, PASOK and its leader faced a major crisis. As press reports on graft and corruption multiplied, Papandreou found himself implicated in the notorious Koskotas scandal. The man by that name, owner of the Bank of Crete and accused of having embezzled large sums from the bank's clients, fled to the USA where he was arrested on November 11, 1988, in Massachusetts. He was then jailed in the US until his extradition to Greece in 1991 where he was tried and sentenced to a 25-year prison term of which he served 12 years. He was released in March 2004. Koskotas alleged that Andreas Papandreou had ordered state corporations to deposit funds with the Bank of Crete and had taken bribes from the stolen money. Papandreou's trial – which he refused to attend, as was his constitutional right as a former prime minister – began in Athens on March 11, 1991. After the tribunal had heard more than 100 witnesses and examined 50,000 pages of documents over the course of ten months, Papandreou was acquitted in January 1992 of all charges. Seven judges on the panel voted in his favor and six against. Two of his former ministers were convicted.

Koskotas's original allegations in 1988 were, however, too specific to ignore. There were resignations of ministers and after a vote of no-confidence in parliament elections were proclaimed. The electoral system introduced by PASOK in anticipation of its eventual defeat cut down drastically the number of extra seats allocated to the party that came first. As a result, although the elections of June 1989 took a toll on PASOK, whose electoral percentage fell to 38 percent, New Democracy, with 43 percent, was unable to form a government and entered a coalition of limited mandate with the Communists. The elections of November 1989 that followed, once the coalition broke down, gave New Democracy 46 percent of the vote but still produced no government. Since the Communists were reluctant to cooperate with Papandreou before a "catharsis" of the scandals was carried out successfully, all three parties in Parliament entered a National Union government under the octogenarian former banker, Xenophon Zolotas, as a way out of the impasse. Several months later the declining economy caused the resignation of Zolotas and new elections were held in April 1990.<sup>16</sup>

New Democracy finally managed to attain the narrow margin required for the formation of a government (with the aid of a deputy from the diminutive DIANA party). PASOK won 39 percent of the vote

and the Alliance of Left Wing forces declined to 11 percent. This marked the end of the first PASOK era.<sup>17</sup>

There is a more positive aspect to Papandreou's turbulent passage. The electoral success of PASOK in 1981 and the smooth transition of the reigns of power to a party with such a radical agenda as PASOK did in fact consolidate democracy in the land where it had been abolished only 14 years earlier. The populist mode of political participation adopted by PASOK had a positive side to it as it brought various left-wing strata into the political system that had been excluded from it since the civil war. One should also stress PASOK's significant reform of an antiquated family law by the abolition of the dowry system, the introduction of civil marriage, equal protection for children born out of wedlock, and consensual divorce.

Having won the general elections in April 1990, Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis set out to improve relations with the US through a defense cooperation agreement in July 1990, which would regulate the operation of American bases and installations on Greek soil for the next eight years. Greece's naval support for the allied cause during the First Gulf War aided the positive climate in Greek–American relations and Mitsotakis became the first Greek prime minister to visit Washington since 1964. Stressing the necessity of decisively opposing invaders, Greece also made its airspace and bases available to the Western coalition's forces. The island of Crete, in particular, was an important launching pad for US operations in the First Gulf War.

However the more serious foreign policy issue that the New Democracy government had to tackle was the one concerning Greece's northern neighbor which called itself "Macedonia." This "name issue" caused tempers to flare in Greece and has been haunting the country's foreign policy ever since.

A complication arose between Greece and Bulgaria when the latter recognized, in January 1992, the former Socialist Republic of Macedonia as an independent state under the name "Macedonia." Bulgarian foreign minister Stoyan Ganev made it clear, however, that this decision did not entail recognition of a separate Macedonian nation.<sup>18</sup> While the threat to Greek security posed by FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) was negligible, sensitivities of the inhabitants of Greek Macedonia were stirred by evocations of past conflicts over the use of the term "Macedonia," especially when this was accompanied by claims on Greek and Bulgarian provinces by that name.

By August 1991 Yugoslavia had almost completely collapsed as a unified state. In the September 8, 1991, referendum in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, the Slavic majority voted overwhelmingly for independence, but the Albanian minority (25% of the total population) signaled, in April 1992, its preference for becoming an autonomous republic. Greek public opinion only gradually became aware of the significance of these developments while Prime Minister Mitsotakis initially displayed flexibility on the question of the emerging state's name. Greece's main concern was that the new state should not use the term "Macedonia" without clarifying its geographic limits by being called "Northern Macedonia" for instance. Given the Socialist Republic of Macedonia's history of school indoctrination and maps laying claim to Bulgarian and Greek Macedonia, Athens considered such a qualification to be of the essence. In an effort to block unqualified recognition of the republic, Greek foreign minister Andonis Samaras recognized Slovenia and Croatia on December 7, 1991, and adopted a common EEC declaration establishing conditions for recognition, which included a ban on "territorial claims toward a neighboring Community State, hostile propaganda (and) the use of a denomination that implies territorial claims."<sup>19</sup>

Other Greek objections concerned the preamble of the constitution to the founding manifesto of the People's Republic of Macedonia in 1944, which stressed "the demand to unite the whole of the Macedonian people around the claim for self determination."<sup>20</sup> The controversy over the terms of recognition created a furore in the Greek media. With a little help from politicians of all parties, except the Communist, the public was aroused by fears that Skopje would monopolize the term "Macedonia." Although Mitsotakis privately adopted a moderate position, his precarious one-seat majority in Parliament curtailed significantly his room for maneuver. When he sacked Samaras and assumed the duties of foreign minister himself in April 1992, he was obliged by domestic pressure to maintain his predecessor's basic position. The subsequent saga of Greek foreign policy vis-à-vis the subsequently named Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has become a case study of how diplomacy fails when it is dictated by an inflamed public opinion.

Ties between Greece and Albania were expanded through a cross-border trade agreement signed in April 1988. A year before, Greece renounced its old claims to southern Albania and terminated the state of war that had remained in force since World War II. After the thaw

during the Papandreou period, relations vacillated between carrot and stick politics. The fate of the Greek minority, which had constituted the main obstacle in Greek–Albanian relations in the past, persisted as a contentious issue.<sup>21</sup>

The Albanian elections in March 1991 allowed the Socialists (formerly Communists) to retain power but the March 1992 elections gave the Democratic Party, headed by Sali Berisha, a clear mandate. The Greek minority was represented in the Albanian Parliament by five deputies of the minority party “Omonia” in 1991, its deputies reduced to two in 1992 and its name changed under government pressure to “Union for Human Rights.”

The deterioration of economic and social conditions in Albania brought over half a million illegal immigrants to Greece. If this number is multiplied by four dependants back home, it can be assumed that more than half of Albania’s population is supported by the remittances (\$400 million a year on average) of workers in Greece, both legal and illegal. In spite of this state of financial dependence, President Berisha chose to strain relations in 1994 by imprisoning five members of the “Omonia” minority organization on shaky charges of conspiracy against the state. Although the “Omonia” group was granted amnesty through American intervention, mutual suspicions persisted.<sup>22</sup>

With Romania, Greece had no serious outstanding problems. Without common borders and old feuds to settle, the two states share a cultural history that goes back to Ottoman times. After the overthrow of Ceausescu, Greece was one of the first states to assist Romania helping it join the EU and NATO.

From the outbreak of the Yugoslav crisis, Greece supported a form of confederation in Yugoslavia that would guarantee the rights of the country’s constituent parts and prevent the subsequent strife that destabilized the region. Drawing on its ties with Serbia, Greece tried on several occasions to act as an interlocutor between the Serbs and the EU and sought to keep communications open. Greek mediation was instrumental in freeing Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic from Serbian captivity in Sarajevo during the spring of 1992 and in maintaining contact between Ibrahim Rugova (leader of the Albanian Kosovars) and the government in Belgrade throughout the latter part of 1992. In addition, Prime Minister Mitsotakis played a key role in brokering the Athens Agreement on Bosnia in May 1993. The Bosnian settlement of November 21, 1995, in Dayton Ohio, may not have solved the intractable problems

between Croats, Bosniaks, and Serbs, but at least it put a stop to their bloody conflict.

Prompted by the precarious state of affairs in the Balkans, Prime Minister Mitsotakis sought to improve relations with Ankara throughout the winter of 1991–2. His attempt to revive the Davos summit with Prime Minister Demirel and promote the conclusion of a non-aggression pact failed to bear fruit because no progress was made on the Cyprus question. The reluctance of Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş to reach an agreement with Cypriot president George Vassiliou on the basis of the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's "set of ideas" during meetings in New York in August and September 1992, indicated that the Turkish government was not prepared to make concessions.

In March 1995, Greece lifted its objections to Turkey's entry into the EU Customs Union agreement, with the understanding that the application of Cyprus for EU membership would be discussed after the intergovernmental meeting of 1997. Greece's move elicited no positive response from Ms. Tansu Çiller's government. A series of incidents between the two states that began in 1994 over Greece's right to extend its territorial waters from six to twelve miles reached a high point on June 8, 1995, when the Turkish Parliament granted the government a "casus belli" license to take whatever necessary action (including military) if Greece exercised its right (foreseen by the International Law of the Sea Convention) to extend its territorial waters.

However, the need to tackle the serious domestic problems proved to be of the utmost urgency for the New Democracy government. Mitsotakis was faced with the dire prospects of balancing the budget, liquidating problematic firms under state responsibility and trimming the public sector. Although the summer of 1990 was marked by a rash of strikes, New Democracy managed to elect the mayors of Athens and Thessaloniki in the municipal elections of October 1990.

The Liberal government of New Democracy which took over in April 1990 faced a monumental task. Inflation was running at 20 percent, unit labor costs were on the rise, debt servicing was draining the nation's resources, tax revenue was dwindling, and tax dodging became more triumphant than ever. With the private sector groggy after ten years of Socialist hardship, the social security system virtually bankrupt, growth hovering around 1 percent, the scandal-ridden public sector more voracious than ever, and unemployment on the rise, the country's

credibility was at its lowest ebb. Brussels was exasperated by the misuse of EEC funds, mostly spent on consumption, while public opinion was becoming dangerously alienated from the country's political institutions in general. The problems were daunting but even so New Democracy had to "hasten slowly" both because of its minuscule parliamentary majority and in order to avert a PASOK-fomented explosion in the streets.

Six weeks after taking office in April 1990, the Mitsotakis government drafted a new budget. Nonetheless, 1991 proved disappointing and unpopular because the government abolished the automatic indexation of wages to inflation which PASOK had introduced in 1982. This was a judicious move aimed at breaking the vicious circle of spiraling inflation until the next devaluation that would start fueling it anew. However, wage indexation was popular with wage earners and they became angry when they lost it. The strikes the new government had to face were vicious and persistent, fueled as they were by PASOK. Wages and salaries fell by 13 percent during 1990–3.

In spite of such measures, the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) remained a stubborn 14.6 percent and the budget deficit high. In March 1992 the EEC Monetary Committee produced a document which was very critical of the Greek government's economic performance. In a move to impart momentum to the government's economic policies, Mitsotakis appointed Stephanos Manos, master of business administration from Harvard University, as minister of national economy in February 1992. "We saw time running against us," the prime minister said in an interview with the *International Herald Tribune* (November 11, 1992), "and we decided to speed up the pace of change." The first thing Manos did after his appointment was to fly to Brussels to pacify an irate Commission. Upon his return to Athens, his bluntness shook his colleagues. He asked for a full review of the economic situation, a radical change of tactics, management by results, full transparency in Greece's relations with the EEC, and a serious and a sustained effort to achieve commonly agreed goals.

Deregulation was at its most effective in the field of Greek banking, notorious until then for its rigid foreign exchange controls and state interference. Legislation that came into force on January 2, 1992, incorporated most of the EEC's first and second banking directives into Greek law, a major step forward. Consumer credit was liberalized and Greeks were allowed to open foreign exchange accounts in Greek banks. Most importantly, the law provided for a phased abolition of the banks'

obligation to finance the fiscal deficit. Historically, the state had relied on the banking system to finance its deficits as all banks were required to set aside up to 40 percent of all new deposits to buy government bills and bonds.

While deregulation allowed firms more freedom to innovate, the government also cleared the decks of the remnants of the institutions created by PASOK that were designed to nurse failed firms into recovery. Of the 44 companies controlled in 1990 by the notorious “Industrial Reconstruction Organisation” which provided life support to moribund firms – that New Democracy inherited from its predecessors – only three were still awaiting buyers in 1992. The others were either sold or liquidated by the government. The \$200 million subsidy given to this wasteful organization was abolished in 1992 and the whole program was shut down later.

The most pressing problem concerned the public debt. In 1980, after the six-year rule of New Democracy by Constantine Karamanlis, it stood at about 35 percent of GDP. By the year 1990, when the second New Democracy government under Mitsotakis took over, the debt had reached 120% of GDP and rising. Of paramount urgency, therefore, was the need to at least stop the increase of the public debt. As of January 1, 1992, salaries and pensions in the public sector were effectively frozen. The private sector was not affected. The government merely applied austerity measures on its own employees as any employer has a right to do when facing bankruptcy. Law 2025, passed in April 1992, empowered the minister to impose limits on the wage bills of all public corporations. In 1992 the government did indeed cap the wage bills of some 25 public corporations restricting them to their 1991 limits despite an inflation rate of 16 percent. The measure provoked a wave of strikes and bitter protests.

The cabinet, in a further move, approved in June 1992 spending cuts across the board amounting to 0.7 percent of GDP. Raising taxes on interest on bank deposits, and on diesel fuel by 40 percent to bring them into line with EEC levels, proved a less than popular move. However, Manos was not easily intimidated. “We had a choice,” he explained in parliament on December 22, 1992. “We could raise taxes or we could cut investment as the Socialists did in 1987. We did the former. It is difficult,” he said, “to expect help from the European Community so that we may cover our deficits while at the same time we indirectly subsidize fuel and then enjoy cheaper petrol than the citizens of the donor countries.”

Such an attitude proved popular in Brussels. Even the usually tight-lipped Danish EC Commissioner Christophersen expressed his satisfaction with the Greek government's efforts to rationalize its economic policy. In spite of visible signs of success, however, a number of observers of the Greek scene were less sanguine in their assessment of the situation. Elections, they pointed out, are not won by restoring painful financial discipline neither by collecting praise from foreigners.

Having brought inflation down from 20 percent in 1990 to 12 percent in December 1993 was a source of satisfaction for the government but this, in itself, did not pay any immediate electoral dividends. Cutting the deficit usually means cutting state expenditure, an important source of income for many. Resentment against the government's austerity measures made PASOK's revival possible – which would have seemed inconceivable in 1989. So when Andreas Papandreu promised that a vote for PASOK in April 1993 would result in bringing back the good old days of the eighties, Greek voters took the bait. New Democracy paid the price for stopping the rot even though PASOK would have been obliged to do the same. The fact that New Democracy was right did not make it popular.

### **The “Macedonian” Issue Once More**

After the collapse of the Communist regimes in southeast Europe, Greece became the obvious candidate for the role of shepherding the wayward states into the Western fold. For 15 years before the collapse, the Karamanlis and Papandreu administrations had systematically cultivated the notion of multilateralism in the region. In spite of Bulgarian, Turkish, Albanian and, to a lesser degree, Yugoslav objections and inhibitions, Greece made important headway in establishing multilateral relations and cooperation in the Balkans.

The disintegration of Yugoslavia began with the secession of Croatia and Slovenia on June 25 and 26, 1991 respectively. On September 8, 1991, a plebiscite was held in what used to be the Socialist Republic of Macedonia (SRM) favoring independent statehood. Greece's terms for recognizing the new state were (1) that it should not insist on the appellation of “The Republic of Macedonia,” (2) that it should renounce its territorial claims, and (3) that it should withdraw its allegation that a Macedonian ethnic minority existed in Greece. These terms were



included in the decision of the EEC meeting of foreign ministers on December 16, 1991, that led to the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia.<sup>23</sup> A paragraph was attached to the decision that restricted recognition to republics that harbored no territorial claims on a neighboring state and that would desist from the use of hostile propaganda or assuming a name that implied irredentist designs.<sup>24</sup>

On February 17, 1992, the meeting of EEC foreign ministers in Lisbon under the Portuguese presidency produced a mediation plan known as the “Pinheiro package,” which, among other confidence-building measures, allegedly included the name “New Macedonia” for the state in question.<sup>25</sup> The “Pinheiro package” was rejected by both sides but the Lisbon meeting had been Greece’s best moment for a negotiated solution. From there on conditions for a solution deteriorated to the detriment of both parties. Greece had lost an opportunity to disentangle itself from the dispute and play its Balkan role, and FYROM forfeited its main route to development.

Although at the July 13 Lisbon summit, the EEC members were still of one mind in upholding Greece’s terms, this was in fact the last stand of a European Common Foreign and Security Policy. A year of problems after Maastricht eventually took its toll on European political cooperation. At the summit meeting in Edinburgh on December 12, 1992, Michalis Papaconstantinou, foreign minister since August, threatened Greece’s withdrawal from a common EEC declaration on Yugoslavia if the summit did not confirm its solidarity with the Lisbon decision.<sup>26</sup> The minister, an advocate of a common stand on Yugoslavia, did so reluctantly, but the feeling was widespread that the bonds of political cooperation had been loosened and EEC members could therefore act as free agents in the UN or the Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The second half of 1992 was replete with scenarios of a Balkan armageddon. The region suddenly became the stalking ground of enthusiastic amateurs and the mass media. Greece was seen by none other than the US Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott as aspiring FYROM’s territory, and Skopje as the birthplace and center of activities of Alexander the Great. By the end of the year it was difficult to salvage truth from the massive assault of the media.<sup>27</sup>

Through the provisional solution of “FYROM” as the name to be used at the UN (1993), the Interim Agreement (1995) was arrived at bypassing the question of the name. To fully appreciate the provisions of the agreement, we must first compare it with two previous draft

texts: the March 1992, EEC-sponsored “Pinheiro package,” and the Vance–Owen UN plan of May 1993.

An open-minded individual with a congenial personality, Papaconstantinou sought to restructure the course of Greece’s “Macedonian” argumentation. Instead of harping on his country’s “historical rights,” the new foreign minister insisted that the former Yugoslav republic would have to give up its irredentism before it was granted recognition by the EEC and the international community. With some delay, Greek policy-makers were beginning to realize that the world was concerned with stabilization in the region rather than being given lessons in history. In January 1993, the three EEC members of the Security Council of the United Nations, Britain, France and Spain, tabled a plan of confidence-building measures between Athens and Skopje, and proposed the accession of the state to the UN with the temporary name, “The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).”

Papaconstantinou’s orchestration of Greece’s performance in the UN General Assembly in January 1993 was a significant break with the recent past. The Greek memorandum concerning the application of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for admission to the UN, submitted to the Secretary-General on January 25, constituted a significant change in Greece’s foreign policy profile. Arguing that “the applicant should not be admitted to the UN prior to a settlement of certain outstanding issues necessary for safeguarding peace and stability,”<sup>28</sup> Greece referred the Assembly to the question of the appellation during Tito’s initial years in power. The linkage of the current nationalist claims of FYROM with its Communist past brought the debate closer to the heart of European concerns, in other words that regional stability should not be further endangered.

After tortuous negotiations and discussions, the plan of the three EEC members for the accession of FYROM to the UN was accepted by Kiro Gligorov’s government on March 25, 1993.<sup>29</sup> The UN assumed the mediation between Athens and Skopje, and New York became the locus of the new initiative.

On May 14 a draft of an International Treaty between Greece and FYROM, proposed by Cyrus Vance in his capacity as representative of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in Yugoslavia and by Lord Owen, was handed to the two parties after long deliberations. The draft consisted of six chapters, the first of which, dealing with “Friendly Relations and Confidence Building Measures,” was the one which

attracted general attention. The wording had probably been accepted by Greece and FYROM, and included “Nova Makedonija” as the single permanent appellation of that state.

It was on the proposed appellation (Article 5, Chapter I of the draft) that Gligorov expressed his disagreement in his letter to Vance and Owen (May 29, 1993). Not unlike Mitsotakis, Gligorov was preoccupied with the political cost of adopting a compound name that would also entail a revision of his constitution. On most other aspects of the draft treaty, the two sides appeared to have been in agreement. The Gligorov objection notwithstanding, considerable progress was made toward a negotiated solution. At that juncture Samaras, who had resigned from the ruling New Democracy Party, declared his intension to mobilize his supporters in Parliament and bring the government down if Mitsotakis agreed to a name that included the term “Macedonia.”<sup>30</sup>

Mitsotakis tried on several occasions to evade the political cost that the “Macedonian” appellation incurred. He therefore experimented with double names – one under which that state would be recognized and another to be used by the state itself. Faced with the Samaras ultimatum, Mitsotakis dropped the Papaconstantinou project and followed Gligorov’s lead by rejecting a “Nova Makedonija” compromise and reviving the “Slav Macedonian” appellation that had already been rejected by Skopje. Mitsotakis’s tactical retreat averted his government’s fall only temporarily. On September 9 two deputies under Samaras’s orders defected from New Democracy and obliged Mitsotakis to call elections in October. Samaras’s pretext this time was not the “Macedonian” issue but the Greek economy.

The elections held on October 10, 1993 gave PASOK close to 47 percent of the votes and 170 seats while New Democracy lost with 39.3 percent of the votes and 111 seats. Mitsotakis resigned from the leadership of the party and Miltiades Evert took over until such time as he too, having lost the 1996 elections, was replaced in 1997 by Costas Karamanlis, namesake and nephew of the founder of the party.

By 1993, Papandreou’s radical days were over. In his speech to Parliament on October 23, 1993, he barely mentioned the word “Socialism.” “The following three responsibilities,” he said, “guide our national strategy: development, stability and the welfare state.” He appointed Yannis Papantoniou as minister of national economy and finance with the mandate of easing Greece’s entry into European Monetary Union. This left PASOK with little choice but to tread roughly

the same path as New Democracy. Andreas's deteriorating health confined him mostly to his home from where he governed giving instructions to his ministers. His new wife, Dimitra Liani, an Olympic Airways air hostess, became increasingly influential in deciding whom her husband was to see and for how long. Rumors were rife that she was trying to postpone his retirement as much as she could. Although not in a condition to govern, Andreas soldiered on for a while but on January 17, 1994, had to yield to pressure from senior PASOK figures (including his own son George) and resign.<sup>31</sup> After two ballots, PASOK's MPs then chose Costas Simitis as the leader of the party out of necessity rather than genuine preference. They had grasped that the populist days were over and that the only way to retain their grip on power was to give Simitis, a moderate Europhile, a chance to prove his mettle. While Papandreou was still alive the new premier moved cautiously keeping the economy ticking over and Brussels reasonably happy that the funds channeled to Greece were not misspent.<sup>32</sup>

Early in 1994, Papandreou chose to introduce an altogether new factor into the Macedonian debate.<sup>33</sup> The US recognition of FYROM in February convinced Papandreou that multilateralism had failed because Greece had been isolated by most of its Western allies. A return to bilateral means of reaching an agreement would perhaps allow Greece to use its own advantages in the region. On February 16 the Greek prime minister declared his decision to "interrupt the transportation of merchandize to and from Skopje through the port of Thessaloniki, excluding necessary goods for humanitarian reasons, such as food and medicine." By doing so he hoped to raise the stakes of recognition as well as to revive the interest of the UN, the EU, and the US in an issue that had failed to attract international attention.

The Greek embargo raised a storm of protest in the Western mass media, but international attention was aroused and Greece felt that it had acquired an important bargaining chip in future negotiations with FYROM. Papandreou soon proposed to Gligorov an exchange of "actions for actions" – offering to lift the embargo in return for the erasure of the ancient Macedonian star from the FYROM flag (which FYROM refers to as a "sun"). The next step would be a comprehensive package of items that would lead to a bilateral treaty not unlike the one that had been produced in the spring of 1993 in New York. Gligorov refused a step-by-step discussion of the problem, but Vance, an emissary of the UN Secretary-General, with the assistance of President

Clinton's special envoy, Matthew Nimetz, resumed the mediation that had been discontinued by Papandreou after his election.

By the end of 1994 Greece's position had in every sense become unenviable. Thanks to the embargo, FYROM had attracted wide sympathy – a sympathy that obscured the true nature of the problem and made its solution all the more remote. Instead of searching for the roots of Slav-Macedonian irredentism, international attention became focused on the embargo itself. As foreign pressure mounted on Greece, Gligorov initially drifted further away from a negotiated solution. Convinced that time was on his side, he proceeded with the consolidation of his position and the internal supremacy of his Slav-Macedonians over the other minorities. The discontent of the sizeable Albanian element in FYROM took the form of violent confrontation with the police in the winter of 1995 and especially in 2001, which led to a virtual war and the treaty of Ochrhid between Slav and Albanian Macedonians.

Throughout 1995 Greece's relations with its northern neighbors improved significantly. Athens and Tirana resumed relations after President Berisha released the imprisoned members of the Greek minority (the Omonia five), Bulgarian Prime Minister Videnov demonstrated his goodwill toward Greece, and a solution to the impasse between the latter and FYROM was pursued in earnest. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke was instrumental in clearing the log-jam between Athens and Skopje, and Cyrus Vance offered his good services as the emissary of the UN.<sup>34</sup>

On September 13, 1995, an Interim Agreement was signed in New York by Greek foreign minister Karolos Papoulias, his FYROM counterpart, Stevo Crvenkovski, and Cyrus Vance as a special envoy of the UN Secretary-General. The agreement was seen from the outset as a temporary one, to be followed by a permanent settlement of FYROM's name. Greece agreed to recognize the state and to lift the embargo in exchange for the Vergina star or sun to be omitted from FYROM's flag. The new FYROM flag retains the "sun" as the national symbol, but in its new form this hardly resembles the ancient insignia of the Macedonian kings. The Interim Agreement also provided for constitutional amendments that disclaimed some of the irredentist aspirations by FYROM at the expense of Greece.<sup>35</sup> The agreement caused less controversy in Greece than would have been expected<sup>36</sup> and the parliamentary debate on the issue was an opportunity for politicians to exchange accusations of past errors.

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The October 1995 assassination attempt against President Gligorov in Skopje postponed the discussions over the new name. By the spring of 1996, the government of Costas Simitis was preoccupied with the Turkish challenges to Greece's sovereignty in the Aegean Islands, while FYROM procrastinated. Although commercial relations between Greece and FYROM are proceeding smoothly after the Interim Agreement, there are those in Greece who believe that only a final agreement on a composite name will dispel the curse of past irredentisms and will also assist the new state on the path of democracy and human rights rather than nationalistic and irredentist aspirations.<sup>37</sup>

In the meantime, the Greek stabilizing effect in the region went unnoticed. A magnet for close to half a million economic refugees and illegal migrant workers from the former Communist states, Greece has become a vital source of support for southeast Europe. Furthermore, Greek businessmen have established themselves in Tirana, Sofia, Belgrade, and Skopje.

## OPPOSITE POLES IN POLITICS. KARAMANLIS VS. PAPANDREOU

Andreas Papandreou died on June 23, 1996. Constantine Karamanlis followed two years later, on April 22, 1998. Strangely enough, it was as if the two most influential politicians of the postwar period staged their deaths as they had their political careers. Andreas attracted the attention of the media until the very end and his funeral became a large public event to commemorate the life of an Epicurean who always craved the love of his public. Karamanlis passed away without attracting public attention and his discreet burial among family and friends became the hallmark of a Stoic existence and a Doric personality. His close associate, Constantine Tsatsos, presented Karamanlis as a consistent statesman who sought to unite the Greeks in his right-of-center political position.<sup>1</sup>

In fact he was a full-blooded conservative with his skepticism about human nature, his Hobbesian fear of anarchy and his preference for a strong executive in parliamentary politics. He rarely improvised and his decisions were usually well thought out and deliberate. He never flattered his public and often admonished the Greeks for their excessive behavior. For his followers he was the strict and hard-working Greek father in a period of scarcity and want. His protestant ethics guided the Greeks from the difficulties of reconstruction well into prosperity. Karamanlis represented the collective super-ego, while his post-1974 opponent, Andreas Papandreou, concentrated his attention on stroking the ego of his public. Given their polar differences of character and social background (Karamanlis's peasant origin and Andreas's upper-middle-class background), there was never a meeting of minds between the two. Karamanlis viewed his opponent as an oddity of the times and hoped this was a transient phenomenon. He was irritated that, like a prodigal son, Andreas was spending the savings of a lifetime in policies



**Figure 12.1** Andreas Papandreou: “To tell you the truth I prefer Swiss Socialism.” “But the Swiss don’t have Socialism!!” A.P. “So much the better.” The cartoon by Yannis Ioannou is part of his collection *O trypios dromos (The Road Full of Holes)*, Athens, Kastaniotis, 1986, p. 30

of no lasting importance, but rarely betrayed his irritation in public. Yet comparing the political views and style of the two is not just a case study of a personal feud between polar-opposite personalities, but rather an account of a generational gap among the political constituencies of the two leaders. Karamanlis attracted the voters who came of age during the hardships of the late forties and fifties, while the supporters of Andreas Papandreou represent the Greeks who reached voting age during the economic bonanza of the seventies.

The person who truly touched Karamanlis’s sensitive core was Andreas’s father, George. The “unrelenting struggle” of the sixties against electoral fraud and the accusations he leveled on Karamanlis’s person left a deep wound on the latter. Failing to come to terms with such personal attacks and lacking the skills of oratory that George Papandreou mastered, Karamanlis chose to depart from politics rather than wage a battle of words for which he was scarcely equipped.

The end of the military regime in 1974 provided the setting for a significant change in Greek political life. The regime had oppressed all political formations but was exceptionally brutal toward the Left. Andreas Papandreou made it his task to castigate the Right for having



spawned the rebellious Colonels, although the historical leader of the Conservative camp, Karamanlis, legalized the Communist Party following the fall of the junta. After 1974 a wider spectrum, including a Socialist and two Communist parties, introduced unprecedented pluralism to the Greek Parliament. It was also the time when a period of sustained growth had come to an abrupt end due to the oil crisis and the paralyzing stagflation it generated. Had it not been for this blight in popular expectations, politics would most probably have picked up from where the Colonels had frozen its development.<sup>2</sup> The pre-1967 liberal reform would have found its worthy successor in the Union for the Democratic Center, a party of liberal celebrities which made its mark by resisting the dictatorship. There was certainly much promise and talent in this heir of the old Center Union. The new political and social circumstances however, and especially the Papandreou factor, upset all predictions. The Union for Democratic Center lost 48% of its constituency to Papandreou's Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) in the 1977 elections and its deputies were dispersed between New Democracy and PASOK.

Unlike Karamanlis, who made the peaceful transition to democracy possible by striking a balance between the right wing and the Liberal center, Papandreou swept his public away by introducing an altogether new political product. It consisted of a series of radical messages transmitted by a novel medium – the leader himself. He offered the people a new narrative “based on a comprehensive worldview and the promise of radical change (*allaghi*).” This construction of the social and political universe was spread in two axes. The first divided the world into “metropolis” and “periphery,” the latter being dependent on the former. The second axis represented the ostensibly inherent struggle between an exploiting “establishment,” both foreign and domestic, and the “people” – that is, all the “nonprivileged Greeks” opposed to the “establishment.”<sup>3</sup>

Andreas's discourse exacerbated polarization in Greek politics and created a *distinct type of strategy with important political implications*.<sup>4</sup> Although PASOK was perceived by part of its constituency as a party close to the center, its leadership insisted in its polarizing strategy. “The Center Union, a party of the center-left, evolved into the main opposition party in the beginning of the 1960s. It forged a collective identity based to a great extent on the republic vs. monarchy cleavage, the traditional cleavage ... which goes back to the 1915 ‘national schism.’”<sup>5</sup>

Was the new dividing line forged by Andreas between the "Right" and the "Democratic Forces" based on class analysis? One of the few PASOK intellectuals, Costas Simitis, considered class politics as improbable in a country consisting mostly of self-employed people and small property owners.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore the scant policy differences between New Democracy and PASOK did not justify the polarizing discourse initiated by Andreas. Although PASOK did embark on some redistributive policies during its first years in power by raising minimum wages and pensions, on the whole it avoided radical reforms.<sup>7</sup> PASOK's left-right split referred to the victors and vanquished of the 1946-9 civil war rather than to a Marxist class struggle. Ultimately, the main target of the conflict was the control of the state apparatus and the spoils that went with it. The major casualty of Andreas's polarization tactics was *the long-term legitimacy of democratic institutions*.<sup>8</sup> Unlike the Communist Party, which was a veritable antisystem organization,<sup>9</sup> opposed to the Greek establishment, PASOK by and large observed the rules of parliamentary democracy. In practice, however, Andreas often challenged certain principles of the constitutional regime by giving priority to the "needs" of the people over the authority of institutions.<sup>10</sup>

The son of a prominent politician of the Liberal center and an educated mother of Polish descent, Andreas Papandreou was enrolled at the American-sponsored "Athens College" high school, studied briefly at the University of Athens, and graduated from Harvard with a Ph.D. in economics.<sup>11</sup> The formative years of Papandreou are the least known to the commentators who tried to explain his meteoric rise based entirely on the evidence of his Greek sojourn. His success in producing a Socialist mutation where his father's centrist coalition had failed in the sixties must be sought in his own fresh look at Greek society. Unlike both right and left, ideologies that recruited their followers by invoking exclusive principles of nationalism and internationalism, or success through personal effort, as opposed to collective solidarity, Papandreou exhibited laxity instead of discipline. Above all, he invoked the flawless instinct of the common man as the sole validating principle of his policy. He therefore became the exponent of a populist view with no precedent in Greek politics. Papandreou's idea of the common people connects with Thomas Jefferson's prototype of the average citizen or even with Andrew Jackson's preference for backwoodsmen. Populism as the cult of the average person has deeper roots in the American rather than the European tradition. With little opposition from an "ancien

régime" of royalists the Lockean revolutionaries of 1776 started off in a state of nature where the individual could prosper without the impediments of rank and privilege. The young Andreas must have been impressed by a society that celebrated modest origin and rendered this an advantage in politics. Nowhere in Europe was the view of the average citizen held in higher esteem than in the United States of the forties.<sup>12</sup>

PASOK was founded in 1974 as a party fashioned entirely after the leadership of Papandreou. The use of the term "movement" allowed its founding father a free hand that a normal party might have checked. Andreas described the constituent elements of PASOK in his January 19, 1975, speech to the Central Committee: "Part of PASOK consists of the old youth movement of the Center Union party (EDIN). Another of something called 'Andreism,' a group with an affinity to the leader rather than the movement. Finally the third element is based on the Left, the conventional as well as the extraparliamentary."<sup>13</sup> In the July 1977 elections for the Central Committee of PASOK the "Andreists," handpicked by the leader himself, outnumbered the old guard of the party.<sup>14</sup> The charm Andreas exercised over his followers prevented voices of dissent being raised even as the movement abandoned Marxism and embraced Social Democracy and finally liberal reformism.

Foreign policy was the subject of Andreas's most famous improvisations. It is also the field where he made his spectacular about-turns and his worst predictions. Thus he considered membership of NATO and the European Community a national catastrophe, he overruled the possibility of an allied attack against Iraq in 1991 and when it did result in the First Gulf War he predicted a long and disastrous involvement of Western forces. In 1984 he embarked on the "Peace Initiative of the Six" for a Nuclear Freeze, along with Swedish prime minister Olaf Palme, Indian premier Indira Gandhi, President Miguel de la Madrid of Mexico, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Raul Alfonsin of Argentina. Ted Koppel, the anchorman of the ABC "Night Line" program, put the most pertinent question to his guests from the Initiative ": ... noble goals, good intentions, but what in heaven's name makes you think that either the United States or the Soviet Union will pay any attention to you?"<sup>15</sup> The answers were full of high principles but a few years later the leaders of the two superpowers made the most effective deal for nuclear arms reduction in the history of the Cold War. Few of Andreas's followers noticed the futility of his many stillborn causes. Those who did also questioned the wisdom of the celebrated common man for

exhibiting such unquestioned toleration of his leader's flawed judgment. In the aftermath of one of Andreas's stunts, a professor wrote a sparkling piece on collective stupidity as a factor that should not be underestimated in public affairs.<sup>16</sup> Papandreou abused the trust of his public so often that populism became discredited and was evicted from official parlance.

After Constantine Karamanlis's departure from New Democracy and the party's prolonged exile in the opposition, disarray and pessimism prevailed in its ranks. The populist PASOK and its tactician leader became the pacesetter of politics. Andreas's major achievements were in maintaining power and controlling the state apparatus. The sole master of Greek politics for at least a decade, Papandreou was without a rival in keeping his opponents off balance and the excitement of his public undiminished. His genius for day-to-day improvisations was perhaps his greatest asset and shortcoming. As his friend Adamantios Pepelasis once put it,<sup>17</sup> his intelligence towered over that of his contemporaries but his view of the future was short term and so was his planning. Psychological portraits drawn mainly by individuals with little sympathy for his person present him as a master of deception and the art of exploiting others.<sup>18</sup>

When the ailing Papandreou was no longer fit to lead his party, the members of PASOK displayed an instinct for survival by choosing Costas Simitis to replace the founder. Simitis, who was never Papandreou's favorite and had been on various occasions subjected to the usual humiliating treatment by the leader, not only injected PASOK with a new modernizing spirit but also attempted to wipe out the major accusation, that of populism. According to Simitis, controlling the state and the benefits it promised became the major objective of Greek populism. "Populism transfers the social problem from the plain of ideology to a level that does not disturb the status quo of social relations. The assistance of the state and the benefits derived from it is the sole objective of political struggles in Greece."<sup>19</sup>

Sociologist Nicos Mouzelis, an associate of Simitis, went further in the analysis of Greek populism by presenting the phenomenon as a method of vertical mass recruitment and inclusion, as well as a venue for renewal of political actors. Traditional clientelism was a much slower process for accomplishing recruitment and more conservative in preserving the status quo.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, whereas populism benefited the leader, patron-client relationships forged lasting ties between

deputies and members of their constituencies. Populism notwithstanding, clientelism was practiced extensively by PASOK politicians.<sup>21</sup>

During the two decades of PASOK in power, there was a resurgence of Greece's traditional "segmentary" society<sup>22</sup> which militated against modernization and development. In spite of Simitis's attempt to reverse this process, civil society had become a concept more alien to the average Greek than before 1981. Civil society suffered from Andreas's populist onslaught. Defining the struggle of the many non-privileged with the few privileged as the only genuine social conflict, he declared war against all elites, be they of privilege or merit.

Simitis's progress from his January 1996 election by the party to replace Andreas as prime minister, until his final triumph in the party congress of June 1996 as leader of PASOK, would have been unthinkable in the heyday of the movement's populism.<sup>23</sup> An individual without a spot of corruption on his record and singularly uncharismatic, the quiet academic outfoxed the establishment of party bureaucrats. He did not however dismantle the power base of his opponents within the party, but as prime minister he divorced his policy-making from the influence of the old guard. He was therefore free to implement his policy while they were allowed to plunder the state with impunity.

Andreas died shortly before votes for the new leader were cast in the party congress of June. George Papandreou, who replaced Simitis as leader of PASOK before the 2004 elections, was also an unlikely person to continue his father's legacy.

## Change of Leadership

Simitis was elected by 2,732 votes against 2,324 cast in favor of Akis Tsochadzopoulos, the most unquestioning of Andreas's lieutenants when he was alive and a stalwart of "Old PASOK" as it came to be known after his death. In a move to consolidate his clear but far from overwhelming advantage, Simitis called for general elections in September 1996 which PASOK won with 41.49 percent of the popular vote and 163 seats against New Democracy's 38.12 percent and 108 seats.

Soon after his election, Simitis had to face a major crisis in the Aegean that brought Greece and Turkey to the brink of a military conflict. In January 1996 a team of Turkish journalists removed a Greek flag from



**Figure 12.2** The 2003 European Union summit in Athens. Greek Prime Minister, Costas Simitis, in the middle of the first row, brought Greece into the Economic and Monetary Union in 2002

the barren islet of Imia which is part of the Dodecanese complex and hoisted a Turkish one in its place. Greek soldiers replaced the Greek flag and the incident was deemed as innocuous by the Greek foreign minister Theodore Pangalos until the then Turkish prime minister Tansu Çiller herself laid an official claim on the islet and began a confrontation that almost led to war. The crisis was defused through US mediation but a claim on territory was added to the overburdened agenda of Greek–Turkish problems.

The fall of the Erbakan–Çiller government a year after its formation allowed a new Greek–Turkish rapprochement to materialize, engineered by American foreign minister Madeleine Albright at the Madrid Summit Meeting of NATO in July 1997. An agreement signed by Greek prime minister Costas Simitis and Turkish president Demirel provided that the two sides would desist from coercion and initiatives that would affect each other's vital interests and would respect the provisions of international treaties.

Relations between Turkey and the EU declined sharply after the European Council in Luxembourg (December 12–13, 1997) excluded the former from the next round of accession negotiations, while including Cyprus along with five central and east European states. Throughout 1998 Ankara and Rauf Denktash, leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, voiced their anger over the rebuff. Denktash's decision not to return to the negotiation table until his own "state" in an occupied northern part of the island was recognized on an equal footing with the Republic of Cyprus, incapacitated the inter-communal talks. On August 31, 1998, in a joint press conference, the Turkish foreign minister Ismail Cem and Denktash announced a Turkish–Cypriot proposal for a confederate relationship between two equal parts of Cyprus. The proposed entity implied partition in every sense except one. By not relinquishing its guarantor status (as defined by the 1960 agreement), Turkey hoped to secure a say on matters of the whole of Cyprus, not just the north of the island. According to Turkish allegations, this would bloc the island's entry to the EU until Turkey itself became a member.<sup>24</sup>

Security considerations weigh heavily in each side's willingness to find a solution. The Turkish Cypriots feel secure with 35,000 Turkish troops stationed on the island while the Greek Cypriots are insecure with the presence of these troops. The prospect of EU accession raised Greek Cypriots' hopes that this may inhibit Turkey's willingness to use force in the future and that EU membership for Cyprus may facilitate a reunification of the divided island.

Following the December 1997 EU announcement of Cyprus's designation for membership talks, Denktash broke off all contact with Glafkos Clerides, President of the Republic of Cyprus, and refused to meet with EU envoys. On December 16, 1997, the Turkish foreign minister announced that Ankara would proceed with the integration of northern Cyprus, if accession talks were to begin. On January 20, 1998, the Turkish National Security Council decided that the integration process would follow the progress of the accession talks. Denktash refused Clerides's offer of a place for Turkish–Cypriot representatives at the accession talks, insisting on the full recognition of his "state" and the transformation of bi-communal discussions into inter-state discussions before agreeing to participate in them.

After challenging the United States on a variety of issues during Papandreou's terms in office, Greece has since the early 1990s adopted a pragmatic stance in its relations with the only superpower. Few

Greeks will disagree with the fact that the EU cannot duplicate the US role in preventing conflict among NATO allies (as was the case in the 1996 crisis). American “even-handedness” is nevertheless viewed with some consternation by Greeks and Greek Cypriots.

The February 1999 clandestine entry of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan into Greece, and the mishap of his passage to Kenya with official Greek complicity, compounded the rift in Greek–Turkish relations. After Öcalan was delivered to the Turkish secret services by the Kenyan authorities, official voices in Ankara accused Greece of being a terrorist state. The nationalist coalition formed after the April 1999 Turkish elections compounded the worsening of relations between the two states. Following the Imia crisis, the Simitis government announced an \$8 billion program to upgrade the armed forces within a period of five years. Turkish armaments and modernization programs exceed \$31 billion, and cause the Greek government much worry.<sup>25</sup>

With the devastating earthquakes of August 1999 in both countries and the mutual sympathy and cooperation these generated, grassroots participation was introduced into a bilateral relationship that had in the past always remained at the official level. It was from the reserves of goodwill in Greek public opinion that prime minister Simitis had to draw in order to endorse Turkey’s European Union candidacy. At the EU summit meeting at Helsinki on December 10, 1999, all member states agreed to grant Turkey candidate status for future membership. Greece’s agreement with the decision heralded a new era of relations between the two states and introduced the EU as a major factor of pacification in the troubled region.<sup>26</sup>

The domestic scene presented even more serious challenges for Simitis. With its founder no longer there to lead it, either formally or from his sick-bed, PASOK underwent a gradual if deep change in the hands of its new leader. While under Andreas PASOK was pursuing “Change” Simitis altered course to what he called “modernization.” A dedicated Europhile, keen on providing specific solutions to specific problems (he was nicknamed “the accountant”), personally honest, professorial in outlook, and slightly didactic in his style, he was as far removed from the populist rhetoric and improvised policy-making of his predecessor as the PASOK party would ever allow him to be. Although he was really the leader of a minority faction within the party, his die-hard “comrades” (as they call each other) put up with him, however grudgingly, in the knowledge that he was the only leader who



could win them elections and allow them to continue enjoying power and its trappings in the way to which they had been accustomed.

To ease his path toward "modernization" Simitis took a decisive step to make this irreversible: on Monday March 16, 1998, the government decided to place the drachma in the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) at a parity of 1 ECU = 357 Drs corresponding to a devaluation of the Greek currency by 13.8 percent. In this way the drachma was tied to the other European currencies, its fluctuation against them not allowed to exceed + or - 15 percent.

The euro was launched on January 4, 1999. While the Communists opposed the move outright, the Greek "Euroskeptics" among the PASOK diehards were not overtly against joining the eurozone. What they tried to do was to maintain the privileged status of various groups, fight bitterly against all necessary reforms and privatizations, and grumble that their government was dominated by an "accountant's mentality" that made it disregard the "real needs of the people."

For those suffering from date fixation who might think that once Greece was safely in the eurozone everybody could sit back, relax, and indulge in the bad old habits, Loukas Papademos, the governor of the Bank of Greece, had some words of warning: "The world does not end on December 31, 1999," he said on June 17, 1999. "A climate of stability is required throughout the year 2000." Once in the much coveted eurozone, Greece would no longer be able to export her troubles by devaluing the currency (she would no longer have one). She would not be able to raise her deficit at will to pay herself money that she had not earned. What she would have to do would be to keep improving the real economy by cutting labor costs, freeing the labor market of its shackles, limiting the role of the state, and increasing the competitiveness and wealth-creation ability of the private sector. It would not just be low inflation that Greeks would have to get used to. It was also a new economic environment in which success would come with a price tag that read: determination, risk taking, perseverance, self-discipline, and consistency.

In spite of the difficulties inherent in the way Greek governments manage to implement fiscal rectitude on recalcitrant unions in the public sector, Greece under Simitis managed to make significant progress toward EMU. The general government deficit was brought down from 13% in 1993 to 1% of GDP in 2000. Even though such figures were later challenged by the New Democracy government and the rosy picture

painted by Simitis attributed to an exercise in “creative accounting,” the fact is that progress was made, even if not as much as was claimed by the “modernizers.” During this period, labor productivity rose by an annual rate of 2.6%, well above the EU average. The annual growth rate of fixed investment rose by an annual rate of 7.3%, almost double the EU average. The annual increase of labor unit costs in Greek manufacturing that had exceeded 17% during the spendthrift days of 1980–4 (in the EC it never exceeded 3%), decelerated to 4.6% during 1995–2000, and fell to 1.3% in 2001.<sup>27</sup>

Simitis’s success in achieving his goal prompted him to seek a new popular mandate. On April 9, 2000, Greeks went to the polls and re-elected Simitis’s PASOK with a thin majority of 43.798 percent of the vote (and 158 seats) against New Democracy’s 42.733 percent (and 125 seats), and barely 75,000 votes separating the winner from the loser. There were a number of “firsts” in this election since the restoration of democracy in Greece in 1974. For the first time, the two large parties alternating in office differed so little. For the first time a party was re-elected for a second time running by actually increasing its share of the vote as compared to the last general election. For the first time a party won the elections for a third consecutive mandate.

On January 1, 2001, Greece finally entered the eurozone to the satisfaction of the overwhelming majority of the population. Public discontent with PASOK however was aroused when Simitis proposed to reform pensions in the spring of 2001. The proposals – motivated by demographic changes and the substantial increase of life expectancy in Greece as in other countries – included cuts in pensions and an increase in total working age before pensions could be drawn. When 85 percent of Greek workers joined a call by the “General Confederation of Greece’s Workers” for a one-day strike on April 26, 2001, and demonstrations rocked the capital and other cities as never before since the end of the military dictatorship, Simitis relented. He parceled out his reforms in smaller packages and announced a significant level of state finance to the pension funds. These were confirmed by a substantial majority at a special conference of PASOK in the autumn of 2001. However, disenchantment with PASOK and the union movement that it controlled was also confirmed. Significantly in 1981, membership of the Greek trade unions totaled 782,500. Twenty years later this figure had nearly halved to 440,000.<sup>28</sup>

Greece’s presidency of the EU in the first six months of 2003 had been fairly successful but had absorbed all the energies of the government

and Simitis. He was fully aware that PASOK had more or less ended its historic cycle and that dwelling on past successes was not winning it any votes. So, in July 2003, fresh from his successful six-month stint at the helm of the EU, Greece's prime minister turned his full attention to the domestic scene. Seven years into his leadership and ten months before elections were due, he made his move. On July 2, 2003, Simitis called for the resignation of all 12 members of PASOK's Executive Bureau. His aim was to stir the party activists – most of whom had grown fat on well-paid government jobs – into activity, as the specter of electoral defeat at the next elections loomed more and more threateningly. Then came the cabinet's turn to be reshuffled.<sup>29</sup>

In 2000 Simitis was faced with a challenge from Archbishop of Athens, Christodoulos. The archbishop, with an eye for publicity, insisted that, contrary to EU practice, new Greek identity cards should include the religious affiliation of their bearer. In spite of the government's steadfast position to exclude religion from the new ID cards, Christodoulos became the darling of certain devout Greeks. He sought to reverse the decision of the government by calling a referendum which was anyway unconstitutional. The identity card issue however made the church confront its predicament to the ultimate conclusion: Either to carry its campaign against the government to the separation of church and state, or to back off and lose face. Although Christodoulos chose to do the latter, he continued to pose as the heir of 1821 heroism in the Greek church. He passed away in 2008 and was replaced by Ieronymos of Thebes, a moderate prelate.

The crisis in the relations of the church of Greece and the Ecumenical Patriarchate that began in 2003 was partly a clash of personalities between Christodoulos and Patriarch Vartholomaios. A variety of ecclesiastical regimes exist in Greece's domain reflecting the different times of accession of each territory into the Greek state. Given that some bishops share their loyalty between the church of Greece and the authority of the Patriarch in Istanbul, this has become a factor of friction among the highest prelates of the Orthodox community. The crisis was finally dispelled by New Democracy education minister, Marietta Yannakou.<sup>30</sup>

In spite of all his last minute efforts to establish control over PASOK, Simitis's second term in office lacked the conviction of the first. Having accomplished Greece's entry into the EMU, he appeared to have resigned himself to the inevitable corruption that had set in among the old guard of the party. Costas Alexander Karamanlis, nephew of the

founder of New Democracy, was voted into the party's leadership in March 1997, following Miltiades Evert's electoral defeat. The young Karamanlis brought the party into the era of opinion polls and image-makers. He managed to win over the average TV viewer and possessed more self-confidence in his public appearances than either Simitis or the young Papandreou.

While still at the helm, Simitis resigned from the chairmanship of PASOK in favor of foreign minister George Papandreou, son of Andreas, and remained out of the limelight as an ordinary MP throughout the next two parliaments. The electoral results of March 7, 2004, gave New Democracy 45.36% of the vote and 165 seats in Parliament, PASOK got 40.73% and 117 seats, the Communist Party 5.90% and 12 seats, and the Left Coalition 3.26% and 6 seats. Karamanlis's first term started with the election of Karolos Papoulias, former foreign minister of PASOK, as the sixth president of the Hellenic Republic. He was sworn in on March 12 after being elected with a majority of 279 in the 300 seat Greek Parliament. The EURO-elections took place on June 13, 2004, and gave New Democracy 43.04% of the votes, PASOK 34.02%, the KKE 9.47%, the Left Coalition 4.15%, and the newly formed extreme right LAOS party 4.11%.

Athens hosted the Olympic Games of 2004, an event that brought enormous numbers of visitors, in a congested city. Although foreign predictions had been grim, the outcome was a brilliant success. The infrastructure work finished in the nick of time and the city was endowed with a new artery and a metro that diminished traffic in central Athens. A 4-kilometer-long archaeological park linked the Acropolis with the other antiquities of the city. The games were conducted with no negative surprises and the opening ceremony was probably the best of its kind. In the words of a commentator the principle of the Greek dance "syrtaki," of starting slowly and feverishly speeding up at the last moment worked, since "a new Olympic Athens suddenly burst out of the dowdy wrappings of seemingly endless construction projects . . ."<sup>31</sup>

Greek-Turkish relations started off on the right footing for New Democracy. The Turkish prime minister, Tayip Erdogan, visited Athens on May 6-7, 2004, and hit it off well with new Greek prime minister, Costas Karamanlis. The latter promised his Turkish colleague the support of Greece in Turkey's effort to become a full member of the EU. On October 5, Karamanlis welcomed the Commission's recommendation to the EU to begin entry negotiations with Ankara.

On May 20, 2004, Karamanlis had a working lunch with President George Bush on issues ranging from the Cyprus problem to the impending Olympic Games. During the meeting with the American president Mr Karamanlis expressed the hope that Turkey, with whom relations were improving, would play a positive role. Nevertheless, Turkey refused to recognize the Republic of Cyprus, a member-state of the EU which she wished to join, prior to the start of accession negotiations on October 3, 2005.

Two years later little progress had been made toward achieving solutions to bilateral issues between the two states. On December 11, 2006, Greece's foreign minister Dora Bakoyianni reminded the 25 members of the EU that Turkey's smooth accession course depended on its compliance with the European criteria.

Throughout its first term in office which lasted three years and six months, the New Democracy government fell short of its electoral promise to reinvent the state. George Papandreou's PASOK proved ineffectual as the official opposition party and the Communist Party reiterated its all-or-nothing mantra on all government attempts to reform the system. Strangely enough it was the Left Coalition, with only six seats in parliament and a rather uninspiring leader, which managed to generate most of the sound and fury over the government's education bill. As minister of education and creeds, Marietta Yannakou became the focal point of Karamanlis's most substantial reform. An intelligent and determined person, she passed two bills through Parliament that will in time transform Greek tertiary education. The first, which became law in 2005, was regarding regular evaluations of university performance. The second bill, a comprehensive overhaul of the 1982 law that had established the tyranny of party politics in universities for two-and-a-half decades, united the Left and the trade unions in opposition to any change of the status quo.<sup>32</sup> There was general agreement that the party politics that had bedevilled universities since the 1982 law was passed should be terminated. The most effective measure to that effect was the article in the bill that called for universal student suffrage for the election of rectors and vice-rectors, as opposed to the exclusive voting right granted to party representatives by the law of 1982. The other blow to party politics in universities was the limiting of the duration of studies as opposed to an indefinite period of tenure allowed to all students by the previous legal regime. Party politics in the university usually draw their candidates from the huge reservoir of the so-called "eternal students."

Absentee students, rather than those who attend classes, usually control the elections of the Rector and Vice Rectors. The new legal regime (as of 2007), which has established universal suffrage among students and has placed limits on the duration of their studies, will hopefully produce new student politics focusing on improvement of studies and infrastructure. The performance of academics will be evaluated regularly by the competent authority. Of course such radical alterations caused a vociferous reaction from all the paragons of inertia. The Panhellenic Federation of Teaching and Scientific Personnel (POSDEP), the trade union of academics founded and run by teaching assistants who were granted professorial status by the 1982 law, without having to compete with extraneous candidates for the position they occupied, did their best to block the implementation of the law. In this they were backed by party hacks who saw their privileges endangered. Some smaller political parties in Parliament and extra-parliamentary left-wing formations saw this as a unique opportunity to make a radical (although reactionary in essence) statement. The elections that produced the rectors and vice-rectors of the Piraeus and Thessaly Universities in the spring of 2008 as well as the Technological Institute of Crete that summer, served the university politicians their death blow.<sup>33</sup>

After more than two years of a public “dialogue,” after hundreds of articles written by academics, student demonstrations, 1,000 university professors backing the reform, and an opinion poll on February 5 showing that 47.7% were in favor of the bill being ushered in immediately and 39.2% preferring this to be done after the elections, the government finally tabled the bill on the reform of Greece’s tertiary education on February 20, 2007. It was passed on March 8, thanks to the tenacity of Mrs Yannakou.

The summer of 2007 saw Greece suffering from the most disastrous forest fires. A large part of the northwestern Peloponnese burned to the ground and state agencies proved much less effective than they had been three years earlier during the Olympic Games. That, along with allegations that government officials might have been involved in a shady deal of structured bonds purchased by four state pension funds, diminished Mr. Karamanlis’s popularity.

The early elections of September 16, 2007, took place with a 74.1% turnout. New Democracy suffered losses throughout the country and won 152 (one more than the minimum governing majority), with 41.83% of the vote. PASOK lost even more than its previous showing with 38%

and 102 seats, while the two left-wing parties KKE and SYRIZA (Coalition of the Radical Left) made gains with 8.15% and 5.04% respectively.

There is little doubt that both large parties disappointed their publics but PASOK lost more to its left than New Democracy to its right. The Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), with 3.8% and 10 seats, made its first appearance in Parliament.

George Papandreou became the immediate target of widespread criticism. Evangelos Venizelos, a minister of culture in Simitis's government, rushed into the leadership contest the very night of PASOK's defeat. Although Venizelos initially led the polls with 60% of his party's support it was George Papandreou who finally won the contest with 55.91% of the party vote as opposed to only 38.18% for Venizelos.

By the end of the first year of its second term, the Karamanlis government sailed into the uncharted waters of international economic crisis with its precarious parliamentary majority. A Parliament that was hardly up to the challenge was confronted by circumstances that required both a resolute government and a responsible opposition. Growing budget deficits and trade unionists of bankrupt public companies bedevilled the state.

Greek history has known many adversities but by the end of the twenty-first-century's first decade, the Greeks appear to have lost their sense of direction. Basking in relative affluence and economic advantage in the Balkans, Greece has become an importer of immigrants who have relieved the natives from manual tasks. Gone are the scarcity and want that inured Greeks to hardship and produced the fierce competitiveness of a seafaring people.

Although it would be futile to pine for a lost underdevelopment,<sup>34</sup> it should become a future priority to shake off the political populism that has become a *modus vivendi* since 1981. Populism, combined with a loan-induced consumerism, has produced a social model which is detrimental to the balance of payments as well as to the character of the Greeks. Present adversity may yet prove to be a blessing in disguise.

## Culture

Greek cultural life throughout the post-1974 period was less impressive in poetic output than the previous period. Lefteris Poullos and Vassilis

Steriadis, who belatedly introduced the American beat generation to Greece as a form of guarded opposition to the military regime, lost their voice after the fall of the dictatorship.<sup>35</sup> Manolis Anagnostakis did not mince words, but his bold verse found no imitators. Nicos Karouzos, probably the most talented of his generation, was a loner with few admirers. Kiki Dimoula made it to the Academy of Athens in spite of her genuine ability to transform the commonplace into poetry, as did low-key novelist of ordinary life, Thanassis Valtinos.

Music made no great strides but continued to conserve past achievements. It was the performing arts with their ephemeral glory that will be best remembered. Theater director Spyros Evangelatos with his memorable *Erotokritos*, Lefteris Voyadjis with his many splended repertoire, Vassilis Papavassiliou with his *Elvira-Jouvet*, Constantine Rhigos' *Dafnis and Chloe*, Dimitris Papaioannou with his *Medea* and the staging of the Olympic Games ceremonies in 2004, and of course, the National Theater productions during this long period of fruition. Furthermore, the State School of Dance has proved with its annual performances that the Greek educational system is not totally out of commission. Theo Angelopoulos, with his consecutive second and first prizes in the Cannes Film Festival, remains on the top of the film directors' pyramid.

The postwar pursuit of Greekness in art has been survived by Yannis Moralis and Panayotes Tetsis. Alekos Fassianos, with his Mediterranean graphics, and Dimitrios Mitaras, offer a kind of parody of that tradition. The diaspora has not failed to surprise us: Kounelis, Chryssa, Antonakos, Pavlos, and Takis are the better known. The art of the political cartoon in certainly the most fertile in Greece. Underground strips, street art, and illustrations have also become the unsung achievement of the eighties and nineties. Of the political cartoonists, Yannis Ioannou who lost his muse when Andreas Papandreou passed away, will be consulted by political scientists when they attempt to decipher the strange ways of possibly the greatest innovator in Greek politics.



## SOUTHERN AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE: THE GREEK VIEW

Europe's emergence from the waters of the Mediterranean Sea as a child of the Hellenic-Judaic tradition was followed by the gradual extinction of the same tradition in the eastern and southern shores of the sea. Islam failed to make significant inroads in the West but destroyed the cultural unity the basin had known during the Hellenistic and Roman centuries. After the decline of Byzantium the region became a frontier of different civilizations and a junction of diversity in terms of economic development, degrees of secular modernity, and the nature of political authority. On the European side of the Mediterranean there is a concept of natural law which does not exist on the other side of the sea. "Consequently, such matters as individual rights deriving from this higher law, to protect the individual from the excesses of the state, are difficult to formulate and maintain".<sup>1</sup>

The strategic importance of the Mediterranean was eclipsed at least twice in history, once by naval technology which shifted the traffic of sea commerce to the Atlantic, then during the Cold War period, when the central front of the Western alliance attracted most of NATO's attention. The alliance turned to its southern flank when the Middle East crises erupted and their impact on the price of oil rocked the Western economies. We are very much in the same predicament today. With the Middle East in turmoil and Iraq in a state of chaos, oil prices sky-rocketing and the Palestinian question further away from a solution than ever, the world can only hope that the 2008 change of guard in the American presidency will make for a significant difference in the Eastern littoral of the Mediterranean Sea.

"Southern Europe," which includes "Southeastern Europe," is not merely a term of geography but also connotes the less developed part of the European Union. Apart from that important common feature however, they share few others in the field of International Relations.

Portugal and Spain focus on North Africa and are remote from Eastern Europe, while Italy and Greece have felt some of the impact of a collapsing Communist world and the resurgence of nationalism in their eastern and northern neighborhood.

The Lisbon European Council in June 1992 expressed a strong interest in the EU in maintaining security and social stability in the Mediterranean. Consistent with this position, the Corfu European Council of June 1994 and the subsequent council of foreign ministers, invited the Commission to submit guidelines for peace, stability, security, and the socio-economic development of the region. According to a communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council and the European Parliament, "Progress towards a Euro-Mediterranean zone of peace and stability would be initiated through close political dialogue based on respect for democracy, good governance and human rights. The dialogue should be extended to security issues, leading to the introduction of measures to consolidate peace."<sup>2</sup>

The Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference held in Barcelona on November 27 and 28, 1995, gave the members of the EU and their eastern and western Mediterranean partners an opportunity to decide together what their future relationship would be. The objective of the EU is to ensure stability and security in the Mediterranean through respect for the following principles: sovereign equality, non-interference, territorial integrity, non-use of force and peaceful settlement of disputes, disarmament and non-proliferation, confidence and security-building measures, and to fight against terrorism, organized crime, and drugs.<sup>3</sup> Migration constitutes the gravest challenge to relations between the EU and non-member states. Linked to the migration issue are the questions of integration, assimilation, and citizenship of migrants within the EU and the relevant issue of Western preoccupation with Islamic fundamentalism. Developments in Algeria have generalized the depiction of the danger in the Western press.<sup>4</sup>

The Caspian Sea and Transcaucasia are geopolitical extensions of the Mediterranean in the sense that such actors as the US, Iran, Russia, and Turkey have been in different degrees active in both regions. Furthermore, the outcome of the present contest between America and Russia and their surrogates in Transcaucasia will ultimately have an impact on Persian Gulf and Middle East politics. The balances between Turkey and Iran and American and Russian interests will also affect relations between Iran and each one of the two great powers.

Greece is located at the crossroads of three continents; it is a part of the Balkans, it belongs to the EU and NATO, and is situated in the center of the Mediterranean – a region of contact between North and South. In the eighties Greece ranked first among NATO countries in military expenditure as related to GDP (5.6–6.5% in constant prices). Furthermore, it pays “a high social cost for defense in that its average conscription period of 22 months was the longest in NATO.”<sup>5</sup> Modern frigates indicate that Greece has “blue water” navy. The air force has third-generation fighter aircraft (F-16, Mirage-2000), but no air-refueling capability.

In past years, Greece participated (mainly through the contribution of naval vessels and base facilities) in the First Gulf War and the blockade of Yugoslavia (Operation Sharp Guard). Its naval forces also took part in NATO’s Standing Naval Force for the Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED). Concerning the prospect of peacekeeping, the Greek minister of defense pointed out that Greece would be ready to contribute troops to a force in the Middle East. Greek troops offered to participate in UN peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh and took part in the peacekeeping force in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) has always been in line with its main opponent, the New Democracy Party, on questions of defense and military spending. The major points of agreement between the two parties could be summarized as follows:

1. By being a member of NATO Greece could better secure Western understanding on her defense concerns.
2. Given the unanimity principle, Greece could prevent the adoption of collective NATO decisions that would prejudice command and control arrangements in the Aegean and undermine Greece’s position there.

Before the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, both PASOK and New Democracy would describe Greece’s strategic importance for the West in the following terms: Greece shares a common border with Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, it guards the approaches to the Adriatic Sea, lends strategic depth in the Aegean, controls the sea lanes in the eastern Mediterranean and off northern Africa through the island of Crete, and finally, along with Turkey, Greece helps to control an area that is of vital importance to Western defense.<sup>6</sup>

Today the two major Greek parties in Parliament see eye-to-eye on practically all the points mentioned above and also share the same anxiety concerning the changing nature of Western priorities in the Mediterranean. Totally committed to the territorial status quo, Greece initially opposed instant and unqualified recognition of secessionist Yugoslav states and counseled caution to its EU partners before an alternative state arrangement was explored. However, the collapse of Yugoslavia has produced the most conspicuous "failed state" in Europe situated in AFSOUTH's (Allied Forces Southern Europe) region of responsibility.

Lebanon, Sudan, and Algeria might be added to the Mediterranean list of "failed states" due to their "inability to bring into appropriate balance the goals of sustainable state power, wealth and welfare."<sup>7</sup> Failed states lead to geopolitical vacuums and, therefore, conflict between suitors that compete for their domination. Of equal concern for regional security are the "troubled states" in the Mediterranean: Iraq, Egypt, and Tunisia. The frailties of their domestic systems, their inability to resolve ethnic and ideological divisions without violence, and the isolation of some from the outside world would lead them to be classified as "troubled states." Yet neither "failed" nor "troubled states" are a new feature in the south of the Mediterranean Basin. While the north was structurally bipolar and stable in its adversarial relations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the south remained unstable and conflict prone. Furthermore, throughout the Cold War period the UN was veto blocked, limiting itself to marginal peacekeeping activities in the Middle East and Africa.

With Rumania and Bulgaria in the European Union, the cavity of the former Yugoslavia and its successor states remains Greece's main concern in southeastern Europe. On the Eurasian side Greek-Turkish affairs constitute Greece's most significant security issue, although since 1999 relations between the two states have been peaceful.

The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the carnage in Bosnia in the 1990s allowed the media to hold Western attention to ransom and had a direct impact on Greece's relations with its partners and allies.<sup>8</sup> Greece's fear that unqualified recognition of secessionist states would destabilize the Balkan region, and its subsequent predilection for the Serbian side in the conflict, served to isolate it from mainstream Western perceptions of the war. Many have argued that, once the Pandora's box of statehood based on ethnic preponderance was tampered with,

misfortunes were likely to follow in rapid succession. New states with substantial ethnic minorities would view such peoples as potential threats to the new-found unity of the preponderant national culture. Yet the climate of international opinion in the early 1990s generally favored the creation of new states. A sympathetic attitude toward ethnic groups that had suffered loss of freedom under the Communist regimes convinced many Western Europeans that the supplicant ethnicities were entitled to self-determination and indeed statehood. No more stark example of the consequences of such thinking exists than the chaos of the former Federation of Yugoslavia.

The EU wielded significant influence from the outset of the Yugoslav crisis. Yet its role has been characterized by inconsistency. At first the EU committed itself to upholding the principles of the 1973 Helsinki Final Act that codified Europe's postwar borders, a fact which affected the policy of states with historically disputed territories. Hence when an EU delegation led by Jacques Delors met with the Slovene president Milan Kucan, it was made clear to the latter that the fragments of an exploded Yugoslavia would not be considered for membership and that the unity of the state was a precondition for future application. Yet in the European Parliament resolution on Yugoslavia of March 13, 1992, the EU altered the requirements for admission from a single state to a "single political entity."<sup>9</sup>

Inconsistency and fragmentation of motives bedeviled European attempts to mediate in Yugoslavia until December 1991 when the German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, made a forceful, but in the eyes of many ill-conceived, entry into the debate. Spurred on by the need to represent the shared sentiments of the Catholics of the German south, as well as vociferous claims of the large Croat community supporting independence in Germany itself, Genscher managed to convince his reluctant colleagues in the Brussels EPC meeting of December 16–17, 1991 to recognize the independence of Slovenia and Croatia by threatening a unilateral German recognition.

Germany's role, although it dispelled the previous ambiguity of the community's policy, ignored two important principles. One was of a legal nature, the other political. The Badinter Arbitration Commission set up by the EU to advise on the applications of the Yugoslav republics for recognition had disqualified Croatia, while suggesting that Slovenia and the Yugoslav Macedonia deserved recognition. Genscher, however, secured a deal with Greek foreign minister, Andonis Samaras, that he

would exclude the Yugoslav Macedonia from recognition if Greece agreed to fall in line with the others on Croatia.<sup>10</sup> Genscher's more serious political error, which was to prove detrimental for the EU's subsequent Balkan position, was to ignore the ethnic minorities within the seceding entities. This meant leaving Yugoslavia within those internal borders outlined by Tito, thus taking a partly unwilling Serbian minority with it. With reference to those Serbs, does such a policy mean that the right to self-determination is subordinated to the principle of inviolable borders?<sup>11</sup> Croatia's leader, Franjo Tudjman, not only failed to address this problem, but displayed an incredible lack of foresight by declaring his state a unitary entity based on the national preponderance of the Croats. Once recognition was secured, Germany's interest in the Balkans dissipated.

The consequences of this hasty recognition of independence at a time when the EU could still have put pressure on Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, and Muslims alike to seek alternative arrangements of cohabitation (whether on the confederal or the commonwealth model) proved to be far-reaching. If the dissolution of Yugoslavia occurred because Croats, Slovenes, and Muslims refused to live in a state with an overbearing Serb element, the five resulting states have reproduced the very same problem within their own realms – exchanging one dominant ethnic group for another in each instance. What the EU has succeeded in doing by recognizing the new states on the basis of ethnic prevalence is to legitimize the ethnic basis of unitary states replacing a federal state.

Greece's Balkan interests were, for reasons of proximity, more vital than for any other member state of the EU. As the most affluent, stable, democratic, and well-allied state in the region, Greece has been ideally situated to play the role of interlocutor in the troubled Balkans. Moreover, Greek views on its interests have not been affected by irredentist claims on its neighbors nor by fear of secessionist possibilities within her own territory. For example, the Greek government has renounced its claims on Southern Albania and the Islamic minority in Greek Thrace, even if its Turkish element has always been dominated by the priorities of Turkey, constitutes just a small percentage of Greece's total population. Rather it has been a case of Greece's motives in the Balkans being driven by the possibilities of a violent disintegration of the southern part of the former Yugoslavia bringing outside powers into the conflict, or causing the flight of more refugees into Greek territory. There are, at the time of writing, almost a million economic

immigrants from the former Eastern Europe in Greece – more than half of whom come from Albania. In a period of recession and high unemployment, these illegal (many moonlighting) workers have put an extra strain on the Greek economy.

Greek foreign minister Andonis Samaras's agreement with Genscher in 1991 to exchange Greek recognition of Slovenia and Croatia for the exclusion of Yugoslav Macedonia deprived Greece of a strong principled position and entangled the country in the "Macedonia problem."

The EU and its member states required the Yugoslav Republic to commit itself, prior to recognition, to adopt constitutional and political guarantees ensuring that it had no territorial claims toward a neighboring community state and that it will conduct no hostile propaganda activities versus a neighboring state, including the use of a denomination which implies territorial claims.<sup>12</sup> The declaration introduced into EU politics a prodigiously complex problem such that it never succeeds in attracting the undivided attention of the public or even policy-makers.

In the Greek province of Macedonia, out of a present population of approximately 2.2 million, 30,000 to 40,000 are also Slavonic-speakers. The exchange of populations with Bulgaria following the First World War and the flight of Communist guerrillas in 1949, who included in their ranks a considerable percentage of local Slavo-Macedonians, by and large ended demands for autonomy. The Slavonic speakers who remained were mainly loyalists who had embraced the cause of the Greek state during the 1946–9 civil struggle. Today the memories of the civil war in this part of Greece have faded, but the surviving inhabitants of the eastern half of Greek Macedonia, annexed by the Bulgarian forces during the period of the Axis occupation (1941–4), still remember that traumatic experience.

The concept of the territorial unification of the three Macedonias into an autonomous whole was first expounded by the Bulgarian Communist Party before the Second World War. It was part of an overall plan to destabilize the bourgeois states in the region and create a new state entity that would effectively be controlled by any future Communist regime set up in Bulgaria. During the war, the unification plan was adopted by the pro-Axis forces in the region, and the Germans tolerated the annexation of both Greek and Yugoslav territory. After liberation, with his resistance credentials and high reputation among the Communists, Tito usurped the plan and replaced Bulgarian tutelage with that of his reformed Yugoslavia. The old "Vardar Serbia" was

named for the first time "Socialist Republic of Macedonia." The irredentist cause of this federal state was recreated and enshrined in the preamble of the current Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's (FYROM)<sup>13</sup> constitution which refers to principles laid down in 1944, expounding the ultimate unification of the three Macedonias.<sup>14</sup>

The "Pinheiro Package," proposed by the Portuguese foreign minister in 1992, allegedly included "New Macedonia" as the name of FYROM. A return to the "Pinheiro Package" would prove beneficial to all parties concerned: for Greece it would avail the quickest land route to Western Europe and for FYROM (as "New Macedonia") the most vital benefits that recognition entails, namely access to the port of Thessaloniki and Greek investments. The survival of FYROM has been in Greece's interest. Most Greeks believe that if its government expunges its irredentist founding doctrine from its schoolbooks and propaganda and desists from using a name that constitutes a claim on a unified Macedonia, "one and whole," the state could surely become a member of the Western alliance and in time of the EU.

The performance of the EU in Yugoslavia suffered more criticism than it deserved. The critics ignored the humanitarian work of EU states via their UN representatives in Yugoslavia, which far outweighs their presence (or absence) in other parts of the world where ethnic groups are also being slaughtered. That the EU was not equipped for peace-making should come as no surprise to an institution that was not originally conceived for armed intervention and began to think in terms of a common security policy at a time when the most credible threat to the West had collapsed. NATO, on the other hand, had no mandate (until recently) for out-of-area operations which also involved coordination with the American *primus inter pares*.

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (under the Maastricht Treaty) was based on the assumption that, if the EU was to become a fully integrated political entity, it required a military arm as well. However, enthusiasm for a common security policy is tempered by the absence of a credible common threat, the persistence of a recession responsible for the creeping "renationalization" of defense in individual member-countries, and the dilemmas posed by "enlargement" of the EU to include states with security traditions that differ widely from the rest.<sup>15</sup> The embargo imposed on FYROM by Greece in February 1994 caused considerable Western criticism. Yet although Greece's allies were quick to lecture her for the harsh decision, no one admonished



FYROM for refusing to shed its irredentist symbols and constitutional preamble, which constituted reminders to the Greeks of Communist Yugoslavia's involvement in their civil war. The 1995 Interim Accord was signed in New York by Greek foreign minister Karolos Papoulias, his FYROM counterpart Stevo Crvenkovski, and Cyrus Vance as a special envoy of the UN Secretary-General. The accord was a temporary agreement, to be followed by a permanent settlement of FYROM's name. Discussions between the two sides dragged and by 2009 no solution had been reached.

The Kosovar Albanians expounded their cause of independence from Serbia but their peaceful resistance, since 1989 when their autonomous status was cancelled, failed to alert Western attention. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) introduced tactics which on other occasions were identified by Western governments as acts of terrorism and predictably attracted both massive Serb reprisals and Western attention. When American envoy Richard Holbrooke appeared in a photograph with KLA representatives, he acknowledged the KLA's role in the solution of the Kosovo problem.<sup>16</sup>

The October 13, 1998, agreement between Richard Holbrooke and Slobodan Milosevic that averted NATO strikes in Kosovo was another yet reminder to the European onlookers that they had remained on the sidelines of Balkan developments. As with Bosnia, Kosovo sharpened tensions between the US and the EU over security issues and many Europeans felt that the American envoy did not even take the trouble to send them a copy of the agreement with the Serb leader. With the withdrawal of the Serb forces the KLA predictably made progress in resuming control of Kosovo. By mid-November 1998 approximately one-third of the countryside was patrolled and policed by the guerrilla forces, which secured passage to travelers or arrested and detained Serbs. The president of the FRY threatened the Albanians with renewed hostilities if freedom of movement in Kosovo was not restored according to the provisions of his accord with Holbrooke.

The negotiations over the Rambouillet Accord in February and March 1999 were eminently successful with the Kosovar Albanians because their leaders grasped the opportunity of an autonomy guaranteed by the West to avoid losing the limelight of international attention. Their hope was that a recovery of Kosovo's functional autonomy would generate a quantum leap in Serbo-Albanian relations and would establish new rules for the region. Although their serve was masterful, the

Albanians failed to anticipate the combination of responses by Milosevic and their NATO supporters.

The protracted NATO bombing of Yugoslavia hastened the process that the alliance professed it would arrest. In fact President Clinton's second and third aim (the first being, "to demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's purpose" to prevent further violence against the Kosovar population and to preserve regional stability), were not served by NATO's action. Milosevic was prepared to take the punishment while proceeding to cleanse northwestern Kosovo of the Albanians and at the same time consolidating his authority at home. His view that the West tricked him into signing the Dayton Accord with a guarantee of FRY's territorial integrity became common currency in Serbia.

Western governments have used various legal arguments to justify NATO action. The most credible is that Milosevic had violated a Security Council resolution adopted in October 1998 that imposed a cease-fire in Kosovo and set limits on the Yugoslav forces in the province. The resolution threatened action if Belgrade refused to accept its terms and invoked Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which calls for the use of force to uphold international peace and security. The question that lingers is why did the alliance choose to enforce this resolution among many that remain inert?

Western agendas have varied before and after the bombing. Before, the EU had lent moral support to LDK leader Ibrahim Rugova and his non-violent protestations and the US had issued warnings to Slobodan Milosevic to desist from unleashing his army against the Kosovar-Albanian parallel state. There was a consensus however among European Union members that the territorial status quo ought not to be altered and that therefore autonomy appeared to be the only possibility the Albanians could expect from their Western friends. The West committed itself to the underdog with an extraordinary use of force that surpassed all predictions. The Kosovar Albanians, after suffering atrocities and dislocation were granted, in fact, their old dream of emancipation from Serb rule. The UN-NATO protectorate will not return to the status quo prior to invasion. Along with an 86-year-old dream came an even older Albania vision of irredentism which included Tetovo, parts of Montenegro, the Presevo Valley, and Albania.

Throughout the last seven years, three of the seven European Special Representatives have been preoccupied with Balkan issues. In spring 2003 the EU was handed responsibility for police operations in Bosnia

which had been originally assigned to the UN. Furthermore, in the summer it took over from NATO its function in the FYROM, followed by a police assignment in December. In 2004 an EU force of 7,000 men replaced the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) with the task of deterring organized crime.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) deployments in Bosnia and the FYROM, the EU has not superseded NATO on security issues nor in the latter's "Partnership for Peace" initiative. The EU, however, holds the most important carrot for stabilizing the region – future membership in an organization that will act as a locomotive of development and democratization. No other state or institution can compete with the EU in this respect. The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) opened for the western Balkan States a process for their eventual integration into EU structures. SAP entailed the conclusion of comprehensive treaties with each state and "deployed important policy instruments, in particular in the areas of trade and assistance."<sup>18</sup>

The Thessaloniki Summit of June 2003 made it clear that the future of the Balkan States was in the EU. Benchmarks for membership included progress in setting up democratic institutions and improvements in administrative functions. "The prospect of EU membership linked to the step-by-step implementation of the SAP has become the major source of the EU's influence in the region."<sup>19</sup> Carl Bildt, the former High Representative in Bosnia, proposed that the EU should move on from Stabilization and Association Agreements toward a multilateral arrangement that would make the whole region of the western Balkans part of a customs union, and other associated policies.<sup>20</sup>

The EU was confronted with the dilemma of recognizing Kosovo's independence once it was declared by the Protectorate's Albanian majority on February 17, 2008. Falling in line with the Atlantic Alliance without considering the implication of such a recognition on the stability of the region may bedevil the influence of the EU in the western Balkans as a force for democratic principles and development. Of all the ethnic clusters in search of self-determination within the former Yugoslavia, the example of the Republika Srpska within Bosnia-Herzegovina stands out.

The case of Bosnia-Herzegovina constitutes an unusual international commitment to the integrity of a state that has gained little by keeping its constituent ethnicities together. There are two possible explanations

for the tenacious effort of the West to finance and maintain an unwieldy federation of reluctant partners. The US and the EU are determined to create a multicultural entity in the wake of a fratricidal war, perhaps to make up for their indecisiveness when the Bosnian Muslims were being slaughtered by Serbs and Croats. Since a guilty conscience is rarely a sustaining motive for policy decisions, especially in the field of international relations, one must adopt James Gow's explanation for why Bosnia and Kosovo have been the two Balkan territories to receive the greatest material attention from outside. Both have been crucibles of multi-ethnic confrontation but, more significantly, Western nations have been eager to protect the Muslim communities in these two territories from human-rights abuses. These two countries became, therefore, the primary laboratories of change after the collapse of Yugoslavia. In James Gow's words: "Because of this heritage, both were key icons of how the EU, with partners and allies, could handle questions of community cohesion and multicultural policy, as well as symbolically ensuring that Muslim communities with secular character and centuries' old traditions rooted in Europe were not excluded."<sup>21</sup>

Be that as it may, the rights of Muslim communities in Europe acquired a special significance in the post-9/11 world. The EU and the US sought to embrace the secular Muslims of Europe as part of a positive strategy in the global war on terror, and produce a showpiece of multiculturalism that would convince the Middle Eastern states that the West did not discriminate between Muslim and non-Muslim victims of aggression. Is it possible, however, that many Bosnians are reluctant participants in this multicultural experiment and might prefer a peaceful dissolution of their segregated state? Bosnia-Herzegovina was the sole federated republic in Tito's Yugoslavia that was not established on ethnic premises. Out of a population of 4,364,570, according to the 1991 census, 43.7% were Muslim (Bosniaks), 31.3% Serbs, 17.3% Croats, and 5.5% Yugoslavs. Given that no ethnic group has an absolute majority, this can never become a state dominated by one people.<sup>22</sup> After Dayton, all major decisions affecting Bosnia-Herzegovina are made by the international protectorate that determines its future.

As a protectorate, Bosnia has settled issues referring to its security concerns and its economic survival. Because of the international peacekeepers of SFOR and EUROFOR, in place since November 2004, the state does not maintain a monopoly on the use of force. The sustained aid Bosnia has been receiving since the Dayton Peace Accord of 1995

has made the economy incapable of surviving without ongoing foreign fixes. Early on, Laza Kekic coined the term “aid addiction” to describe Bosnia’s economic condition and pointed out that “growth regressions indicate that external aid has had a very weak positive impact on the performance of transition countries.”<sup>23</sup> Ten years after Dayton, the country’s unemployment fluctuated between 37 percent and 40 percent.<sup>24</sup> Much of the national budget is allocated to perpetuating the structural inefficiencies of a complex system of regions and entities destined to keep the three constituent ethnicities apart. The Dayton Accord granted the “Serb Republic,” covering 49 percent of the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, far-reaching autonomy. The Federated Bosnia-Herzegovina (a loose federation of Croats and Bosniaks) was decentralized to encompass ten regions, five Bosniak, three Croat, and two with a mixed population. The central government is weak and its authority has in fact been wielded by the Office of the High Representative (OHR) of the EU, who has replaced members of the elected Bosnian authorities, annulled laws voted in Parliament, and even dissolved political parties. Voters do not represent a “demos” but rather their three ethnic groups. The Central Bank is also run by an international official.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is managed by the foreign authorities of the protectorate and the three governments are run by parties deeply entrenched in ethnically based politics that often impede mutually beneficial reform. “Reforms at the state level, such as the introduction of a state command over the armed forces of the entities and the establishment of the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) and of the judiciary have been all instigated by international actors, most prominently the OHR.”<sup>25</sup>

This entity’s slow progress and the resistance of at least one of its three constituent parts to any joint existence – the rationale for any state is the willingness of its people to live together – has only secondary importance in Western priorities.<sup>26</sup> One may wonder if the right of self-determination granted to Montenegro and Kosovo would not have a beneficial effect on the settlement of frozen conflicts if extended to the Bosnian entities.

Following Kosovo’s declaration of independence on February 17, 2008, America’s certainty that this is a special case among entities seeking self-determination has prodded several EU states to fall into line. In fact, Kosovo is in no sense unique. There are striking similarities with a host of other entities, including Republika Srpska of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nagorno Karabakh of Azerbaijan, Abkhazia and South Ossetia of

Georgia, the West Bank under Israel, and a host of others. Europeans willing to give Kosovo the benefit of the doubt are perhaps trying to make amends for having failed to take concerted action during the Bosnian carnage. EU failure to produce a common foreign and security policy in the nineties invited the US and its decisive military action into the region. Championing the cause of the underdogs in the Yugoslav struggle for territory, the Americans hoped that they would promote multicultural democracies in the western Balkans. It appears that they have merely succeeded in setting up two Western protectorates, run and financed by Western states, that are hardly multicultural. Bosnia-Herzegovina is a federal state with its constituent ethnic groups totally segregated from each other, while Kosovo (95% Albanian) is probably one of the most ethnically homogeneous places in Europe. It is equally doubtful if the US has secured Arab or Iranian approval as a result of its pro-Muslim humanitarian action in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Until recently, American policymakers considered the region a periphery of the Caucasus and the Middle East, both hubs of energy, rather than valuable in itself. The eclipse of Russia's regional presence, however, appears to be over and its comeback is spurred by the advantage its position in the energy sector affords it. According to Russia, the status quo established by Security Council Resolution 1244 has been violated by states that have granted Kosovo recognition.

It is difficult to foresee the full spectrum of consequences that Kosovar independence will generate. In principle it will create a precedent that will make it impossible for Western states to deny self-determination to other candidates under similar circumstances. Be that as it may, the EU still remains the best hope of the western Balkans that they will return to normality and prosperity, and Greece will fall in line with any EU decision that serves that purpose.

EU policy in the region has been following a dual track: 1) It has been using the "soft tools" of gradual transformation of candidates into potential EU members. 2) It has deployed the "hard tools" of military intervention and the building of protectorates to establish a security preserve in the Balkans. The transformative power of the EU however will only work if through its Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) it can assist the candidates to graduate from their present state of protection and aid-dependence, into emancipated and self-governing entities.<sup>27</sup>

# NOTES

## Introduction

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  - 24 Florian Bieber, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: Slow Progress Towards a Functional State," *Southeastern European & Black Sea Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, March 2006, p. 43.
  - 25 *Ibid.*
  - 26 "Political community is the basic requirement for statehood, without an agreed political community, then any state is likely to be subject to internal pressures, with politics focused on the nature and essence of the polity



rather than on decisions over day-to-day life," Gow, "Europe and the Muslim World," p. 474.

- 27 Rosa Balfour (Rapporteur), "The Balkans in Europe: Containment or Transformation? Twelve Ideas of Action," *European Policy Centre Working Papers*, no. 31, June 2008, pp. 10–20.

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This selection of titles aspires to guide the reader into the path of prominent works on modern Greece, some fresh out of the printer's, others middle aged, and a few that have withstood the ravages of time. For an even more refined selection see the names suggested below. We have already mentioned Constantine Paparrigopoulos's multi-volume *History of the Hellenic Nation*. It is the single most-read history work of the nineteenth century and constitutes a compendium of Greek irredentist ideology. His attempt to prove the continuity of Greek history in time won him enthusiastic adherents in Greece. He refuted the biological interpretation of history, which was in fashion among central and western Europeans and persisted with the unifying influence of cultural heritage.

A source of inspiration for scholars who came of age in the 1970s and early 1980s is John A. Petropoulos's *Politics and Statecraft in The Kingdom of Greece 1833–1843* (Princeton, 1968). The book includes an in-depth analysis of the social forces that led to the Greek War of Independence, 1821–30. John S. Koliopoulos's *Brigands with a Cause: Brigandage and Irredentism in Modern Greece 1821–1912* (Oxford, 1987), is an sample of social history that draws from the Petropoulos example and pursues research into primary archival material on the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The period of Greek history which has drawn the greatest interest of researchers, following the Greek War of Independence, has been the Second World War, occupation, and civil war (1940–9). An important reader on the subject is John O. Iatrides (ed.), *Greece in the 1940s. A Nation in Crisis* (Hanover, NH, 1981), and the best eyewitness account is provided by C. M. Woodhouse, *Apple of Discord* (London, 1948). William H. McNeil's, *The Metamorphosis of Greece since World War II*

(Chicago and Oxford, 1978) provides a brilliant synopsis of Greece's transformation in the postwar period. John K. Campbell, *Honour Family and Patronage* (Oxford, 1964), has been the guiding influence in a series of works in social anthropology that dealt with Greece. Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Modern Greece. Facets of Underdevelopment* (London, 1978) contains a theoretical framework for approaching the sociology of Greece as well as a compilation of important Greek works that appeared in the 1970s. In the realm of international politics, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), an independent institution that attracts prominent scholars in the field, has produced basic works on Greek foreign policy and security.

The most useful general readers on modern Greece are John Campbell and Philip Sherrard, *Modern Greece* (London, 1968), and Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge, 1992).

Of the selected bibliography below consisting only of titles in English, scholars should make note of the following names: Alexander, Alexandris, Barros, Beaton, Blinkhorn, Campbell, Clogg, Close, Couloubis, Dakin, Featherstone, Gardikas, Gounaris, Harlaftis, Hatzivassiliou, Herzfeld, Hirschon, Iatrides, Ioakimidis, Kalyvas, Kitromilides, Koliopoulos, Kofos, Kontogiorgi, Leon, Leontis, Livanios, Llewellyn-Smith, Mackridge, Mavrogordatos, McGrew, Mazower, Pentzopoulos, Petropulos, Petsalis, Runciman, Stavrianos, Toynbee, Tsoukalis, Tsoungarakis, Valinakis, Veremis, Vryonis, Wilson, Woodhouse, Zakithinos, Zolotas.

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